CONFESSIONS OF A BARBARIAN

BOOKS BY

GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK

NINEVEH, AND OTHER POEMS

A GAME AT LOVE, AND OTHER PLAYS

THE HOUSE OF THE VAMPIRE

CONFESSIONS OF A BARBARIAN

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By

GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK

NEW YORK
MOFFAT, YARD AND COMPANY
1910

Published April, 1910

FROM

THE AUTHOR OF THIS

TO

THE AUTHOR OF HIS EXISTENCE

Franz Georg Edwin Louis Withold Viereck

WHO

WHATEVER HE MAY THINK OF THEM

INSPIRED THESE PAGES

PREFACE

THIS book reveals America to herself by interpreting Europe. I stand in symbolic relation, so to speak, to both hemispheres. My twofold racial consciousness serving as a fulcrum, I am enabled to pry two worlds—Archimedes aspired to lift but one—out of the furrow of their mutual misconception.

I have seen the soul of the subtle siren Europe. I have chronicled facts from her unwritten history, from the secret pages of diplomatic portfolios. From her have I also learned verities greater than facts. I may speak *ex cathedra:* infallibility I claim not. I have emulated not the labored minuteness of old school painters who, numbering each hair of the head, make themselves rivals of God, but the thumbnail sketches of Whistler and the chromatic riots of Boecklin.

My book, though published serially in William Marion Reedy's brave weekly, *The Mirror,* is journalism only in the sense in which that term may also be applied to the *Reisebilder* of Heine.

If the dramatic poet may fashion himself to the exigencies of the stage, shall not literature disguise itself unreproved in the cloak of news? Only those are of all time who, like Rabelais, Cervantes, and Voltaire, are in immediate touch with their own time.

Having navigated unknown seas of Germanic psychology, I chart them. I trace the tangled lines of an elder civilization. I record spiritual data that elude Baedeker. The guileless American mind rebels against certain peculiarities in the culture of Europe. I have dived through troubled waters as one dives for the pearl, to discover their hidden meanings, the wisdom encrusted in all things ancient.

I urge Europe's gospel of tolerance. I lead those who follow me out of the Babylonian captivity of Puritan prejudice. I have been accused of posing, because, in a world of antinomies, I am an inveterate truth-teller. This is my flesh and blood. I could not more frankly denude myself in the sanctity of the Confessional. I speak with the truthfulness of Saint Augustine, of Rousseau, and of George Moore.

GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK.

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CHAPTER I

THE OLD WORLD LURE

I HAVE no intention of rivaling Baedeker. I met him abroad. He is an excellent man, the distinguished son of a distinguished father—high priests of travel both. Far be it from me to take the bread from his mouth.

It gave me a curious feeling to meet Baedeker. It was almost like meeting the *Encyclopædia Britannica.* I had always thought of him as a little red book, not as a man. I don't remember what we said. Probably it was of no special significance.

One speaks of *sins* of omission. Why not of *virtues?* Besides, I am not a vender of useful information. I don't like scenery. I detest things. And of geography I have a positive horror. The distinguished Harvard professor was not far from right when he said I was more interested in myself than in Europe.

I am an inveterate individualist. Men and ideas are to me the only realities. Even we human beings are but ideas incarnate, particles mys-

terious and vibrant of the great world-brain. Perhaps, as Heine suggests, life is only the fevered dream of some malevolent demon?

We are not theologians, however. Without inquiring into primary causes, we ponder with changing emotions the prism of the world. Of its multiple aspects some to us are exciting and novel. We respond less readily to stimuli already familiar. To the weary eyes of the gods all things are hued with indifference. I shall depict the exceptional from an exceptional visual angle.

I admit I am very unjust, and surely misleading. The grotesque piques my curiosity. I overemphasize sex. Nevertheless, I am truthful. I practice all the Christian virtues, without faith in any. If my impressions are colored—they are—there is always Baedeker to fall back upon. There is consolation in statistics, and an antidote in the atlas.

Not long before my trip abroad I had lunch at the Astor with the German novelist Felix Holländer, literary adviser of the *Deutsche Theater* in Berlin. We looked out upon Long Acre Square. My visitor was disappointed. It seemed to him that we were already too sophisticated, too civilized. He had not expected Indians in City Hall, but he deplored the absence of the vigorous primitive note which the imagination of the Old World associates with the New.

I assured him that our seeming culture is all

superficial. Can we learn in a century, except parrot-wise, the lesson of five thousand years? With us it is all veneer. Scratch the American and the aboriginal Indian appears.

The savage, to be sure, is more interesting at times than the sophist. But he is utterly absurd when he is ashamed of himself, or pretends to be civilized. The average American in literature and in morals is a Hottentot wearing a stove-pipe. His sophistication is unreal. His wisdom is shrewdness. His vices are ordinary, his religious convictions shallow. He is good-natured, but ignorant and irreverent. He has the heart of a child and the conceit of a monkey.

Abroad they imagine that our minds are as vast as our lands. They credit us intellectually with the expansiveness of the Harriman roads and the subtlety of the Standard Oil. They don't understand that we have subdued the forces of nature materially without having conquered them in spirit. We do not penetrate to the heart of things. The poetry of commerce eludes us. We build highroads between continents, without imagination. Our outlook is provincial. We utterly lack *finesse.*

Our patriotism is the only imaginative ingredient in our national structure. It is crude at that—and hysterical. And it does not prevent us from cheating our country in business. Our savagery is apparent in our mediæval administration of

justice; in our vulgar disregard of æsthetics for morals; above all, in our absurd and insincere worship of females. The American man has rightly been called the pay-monkey of the American woman. He pays for her *lingerie* as well as her folly. She is protected, set aside, placed on a pedestal, both by the law and by custom. He is defenseless. Our government is a matriarchy in disguise.

I was born on the Continent, but brought up in America. My racial consciousness is distinctly dual. I am at home in America. I have an insider's view. But an insider's view from the outside—dispassionate, impartial. Yet I am not embarrassed for a thread in the labyrinth of Europe. I need both countries as a legless man needs his crutches.

Europe is essential to my well-being. I must bathe periodically in the fount of its authentic civilization, wallow in its corruption, soar in its dreams. Still, I am too much of an American to lose myself in it altogether. I have seen its depths and its heights. I have conversed with counts and cabbies, art students and ambassadors, scientists, soldiers, privy councilors and prostitutes. There was much that I admired, and much that depressed me.

I tried to understand it all, and to make the best of it. At every step I became increasingly conscious of being constituted differently from the

people I met and saw. But the first impressions were overwhelming. When, alone and a stranger, I entered Berlin, the luminous heart of Europe, my emotions were those of a young Barbarian who had crossed the Alps for the first time, and for the first time saw Rome.

The trip itself held no allurements for me. Like Oscar Wilde, I am bored by the ocean. I prefer sherbets to sunsets. I am, however, not insensible to the loveliness of the visible world. But I cannot take it, as Germans drink beer, in slow sips. I gulp it down, like a cocktail.

It is absurd to go abroad in the summer when everybody is in the country. I went late in the fall. There were only a few people on board. Mostly musical students. There were two flirtative Western girls with their mother. The mother was like a hen—an intelligent hen. The girls were singing birds—pretty and flighty.

One of the girls on board had large eyes like a doe. They tell me her voice was charming. She had scraped together every cent to study abroad. And she was very grateful for every little attention. It hurt me when she laughed. I always felt somehow as though she were going down to some tragic cataclysm.

I hope she will never see this.

Then there was a flute-player, a spirited little girl, with whom I was in love for two hours, while the train rolled from Cuxhaven to Hamburg.

The men were in the minority. There was a coarse ship's physician. And there was Hans. Hans was a sailor-boy, eighteen summers old, and absolutely delightful. The women made positively indecent advances to him which they would hardly have made to a social equal. The boy, clever, well-educated, requited their efforts with smiling contempt. They saw only the smile. The contempt escaped them.

In the first cabin were only three men passengers and a tenor. The tenor had no voice. One of the men was a Chicago physician, whom the law permitted to practise and to kill within the confines of the United States, but who went to Vienna to acquire more precise methods of murder. The Standard Oil Octopus was also represented on board. It had one of its tentacles there: a young engineer. I looked upon him with awe, as one looks upon a policeman.

The Standard Oil Company is the most awe-inspiring thing in the United States. It is more stable than the government. Certainly it is more powerful and of more profit to us. Trust magnates, like politicians, work for their own pockets. But trust magnates can afford to be more magnanimous. The Trust, being productive, cannot enrich itself without enriching the country.

I completed the masculine trio.

We spent most of the time in the smoking-room, discussing women,—the three men and the

tenor. I did the talking. The trip was a liberal education—for them. I painted the Eldorado of Europe in glowing colors.

Not that I believed in that Eldorado. I was afraid that I would be horribly disappointed. Yet intellectual curiosity urged me on. I sometimes seem to myself like the Wandering Jew in Otto Julius Bierbaum's *Seltsame Geschichten,* doomed ever to seek for the truth without believing in its existence.

Emotionally I was totally apathetic, until we approached the British Isles and the Old World Lure began to exert upon me its irresistible fascination. Vast and multi-colored vistas came to me on the pinions of memory when I realized with a thrill that the jagged line at my left hand was Shakespeare's England and that "the pleasant land of France" dreamed at my right. I thought of Napoleon crossing the channel, a prisoner. And I thought of another sad exile whom the British have killed and whose grave is in Paris.

Oscar Wilde rests not far from one whom Germany, to her shame, has rejected. Like him, a poet, brilliant and cynical. And, like him, the son of a race down-trodden and melancholy. I wonder if in desolate nights the ghost of Oscar Wilde holds concourse with Heinrich Heine? And if the worm has not devastated their smile, they may even smile, seeing that both are revenged on their people. Bernard Shaw, the cynical voice of Wilde,

with none of Wilde's poetry, has turned England topsy-turvy; and *Jüngstdeutschland* has received from Heine his poison, but not his honey.

And I thought of the Vikings who discovered the New World before the birth of Columbus. And of the Wars of the Roses. I thought of Swinburne, the voice of the sea and of sin; and of Darwin and Goethe; of Maeterlinck and D'Annunzio. I thought of Jeanne d'Arc, who was burnt as a witch and is now a saint. And I thought of the Roman days.

I thought of Cæsar who had conquered Gaul, and of the Briton who conquered Cæsar. I saw Plato with his noble, strangely Germanic visage, and Socrates with the face and the cheeks of the Slav. This was the land where Jupiter had loved Europa, and Prometheus had snatched the fateful fire! And in the far distance I almost felt the presence, stupendous and terrifying, of Asia, mother of continents, plagues and messiahs.

CHAPTER II

FIRST SHOCKS

We in America make things most unpleasant for newcomers. We inquire into their solvency. We question their morals. And, naïvely enough, ask their political faith. Europe receives her visitors with the smile of a woman of culture. And beams her broadest smile upon us. The Old World regards us with a curious mixture of amusement and awe. Much as the subtle-witted Greek may have looked upon his Barbarian conqueror. They are afraid of us, but they refuse to take us seriously. Some one has compared Germany to Greece; we have been called the Rome of the Western World. In Germany to-day the spirit of Athens is vibrant—there are some who say that Plato himself was a German. Our coarse-fibered strenuosity relates us in many ways to the Romans.

Like the Romans we lack ideals and ideas. Subtleties are beyond us. We have no sense of tradition and reverence. There are only three traditions we cherish: the Monroe Doctrine, the Puritan Sabbath, and the absurd superstition that

the White House should harbor no man for more than eight years. We adhere to these traditions with Antony's devotion to his matchless inamorata. We nurse them with the frantic affection of a grief-stricken Niobe. They are all we have. All else is chaos.

Irreverence for old age is bred in our bones. We hate established things. Like children, we sometimes break our toys merely to break them. To feel that we can do things. The will to live is strong in us, but we express it crudely. Frequently, to use a Vergilian phrase, by "making a noise with our mouths." On Election Day and on the Fourth of July we are the noisiest two-legged animal. The rattlesnake, not the eagle, should be our national emblem. The League of Silence, consecrated to humanity by Mrs. Isaac L. Rice, and the "noiseless gun" invented by Hiram Maxim, are the two most auspicious events in the history of American culture.

Quiet distinction is beyond us. We must shriek at the top of our voices. We have no manners. We lack urbanity. The little tug that takes you to shore in Hamburg is called "Welcome!" And across the bow of the one that takes you back is written: "*Auf Wiedersehen!*" No American brain could have conceived of this. It is too gracious and simple. We would christen the one, "Undesirable Immigrant;" and bestow upon the other the appellation "Avaunt!"

There is a train that takes you to Hamburg from where you land. It is more comfortable than our parlor-cars. There are little compartments, each with doors and curtains. Drawing down these curtains, one may safely stretch one's limbs in the languid sleep of the wicked. If sleep has no allurements for us, we may yield to the blandishments of his brother Cupid. The German's *coupé* is his castle. No Pullman porter's face emerging from the horizon like a great, black moon, will eclipse, even momentarily, your beautiful *vis-à-vis*.

I received, however, two severe shocks on that trip. One, when the conductor on his circuit of inspection demanded the visible evidence of my right to occupy the compartment. He spoke to me tenderly, as a mother speaks to her nursling. My astonishment yielded to utter felicity—I gasped open-mouthed, when he actually lifted his cap to me. He saluted me! He made me feel like a railroad president. Courtesy dwells in the bosom of the German railroad conductor.

The second shock was no less severe. The Western lady with the two daughters, (the Hen), was the cause of my consternation. There was a man selling beer at the station. She almost gobbled up his tray with her hungry eyes. But her tongue still refused to articulate the desire that had already subjected her conscience. For he who looks at a glass of Pilsener with an evil longing is

no longer a teetotaler in his heart. At last, with a gesture of despair, she beckoned to him, glancing guiltily at my countenance, then lit up with incomprehensible glee. I am sure she felt horribly wicked. But the struggle between thirst and propriety had consumed several minutes. Precious minutes! By the time the man reappeared with his tray the train was already in motion. He slowly vanished from our field of vision, waving to us from afar his frantic regret, like the ghost of a sin we had not dared to commit.

The sense of propriety, like the chameleon, changes with its environment. Americans abroad are humanized for the time being. They dispense with convention; they breathe with a novel freedom. Our conventions don't fit us. They don't fit any man. We are glad to discard them. We leave them in cold storage in Hamburg or Bremen. We redeem them on our return. Once back in America we are very proper—Tartuffe when he goes to church.

When you arrive in a European city the first thing you do is to take a cab. It is delightful and inexpensive. How different from when you land in New York! Abroad, if you think you are overcharged, you call a policeman. And you are safe. Alas! it is not so here. Recently a friend of mine, a young Hungarian poet, on his arrival hired a cab at a Hoboken ferry. His destination was Harlem. When the cabby finally mentioned his

price, the bard insisted upon being driven back to Police Headquarters in Mulberry street. He came near being locked up. In the end he had to unburden his pocket of twenty-five dollars. For that price you can hire a cab for a week in Berlin.

There is much to be said for the cab. Need I conjure up the delightful murders and mysterious elopements the novelist's imagination associates with this vehicle? Wherever the hansom monopolizes traffic, life is wonderful and complex. It is an inducement to self-respect. It makes you feel like a millionaire. The swift revolution of the wheels annihilates distance, and creates class distinction. I can afford to take a cab. My washerwoman cannot. That is, abroad. In this country we would both travel by trolley, and I should have to give her my seat if the car were crowded. I don't want to hang on the same strap with my barber! Not that I am a snob. But the thing is impossible.

Europe recognizes without much ado the barrier between us. America blatantly denies the ultimate lesson of evolution, the doctrine of differentiation. Here he and I are equals, unless my coffers overflow with iniquitous riches, and the smell of gasoline is sweet in my nostrils. Then, indeed, even Justice will incline her scale in my favor, and the magistrates of the police court, sitting in judgment over the quick, not the dead, will

tenderly hail me by name when a blundering officer of the law has again arrested my speed and my chauffeur.

In Europe the barber will always remember his station. He will not forget it if we meet on the street. Decades may pass while he wields the razor; his shavings may amount to a pile: he will still be a menial. Of course the case is different if he suddenly develops a tenor voice. Then Europe will carry him upon her shoulders. The bomb of genius breaks through the barrier of caste. But the day we erase from our cerebrum the absurd fallacy of equality we shall rejoin the choir of civilized nations. Inequality, differentiation—as Washington knew—is the essence of culture.

On leaving the cab you tip the coachman; only a few pennies—he will salute you, and smile, and be happy. In America, where he is your equal, he will pocket your generous tip with a savage growl, as if you had tried to insult him. He will hardly say "Thank you!" In that respect he seems to have entered into a silent conspiracy with his cousin the barber, and his brother the waiter. When I give a tip abroad, I feel that the Recording Angel is entering the transaction on the credit side of my ledger. When I tip an American I feel I am being robbed. Wine turns to gall in my glass. I become a misanthrope and a miser.

At the hotel you will probably order a meal. You may not want a hearty meal. You may not feel like eating your way through a big *table d'hôte.* So you order some *Wiener Schnitzel,* and *Preisselbeeren,* and some Moselle wine. The *Preisselbeere,* let me add, is the cranberry raised to the *n*th power. The waiter brings you the viands, not as if he were doing you a favor, but as if you were actually a person of consideration. Everything he brings you is toothsome. There is a delightful individuality about it all.

Our lack of imagination is most obvious in our food. The art of dining expires upon the bosoms of our cooks. The intolerable monotony of the American menu merits a chapter in Dante's *Inferno.* We are invariably compelled to fall back upon the last resort of the unimaginative—steak. In Europe every restaurant has its specialties. Try the same dainty in two different *ratskellers;* you can tell blindfolded which is which. That is, if you are a *gourmet.* If you chew your food with your imagination, not alone with your teeth.

Ah! and the nice crisp rolls they have! And for their rye bread I would sell my soul to the devil. You are about to regale yourself with the bread. Suddenly you miss something. *"Ober!"* you cry. That means Waiter Superior. Every German waiter is called *Herr Ober.* That is a sop to German patriotism. It implies the excellence of the

German waiter. He is the Overman of waiterdom.

The *Herr Ober* appears anxiously scanning your face. "Where is the butter?" you ask.

"Butter? The gentleman didn't order any."

Yes! You are actually expected to order your butter. And, what is more, the items will appear on your check. In France they make you pay for your napkin. But at the final reckoning you find that you are saving a lot of money. In New York I pay for my modest needs at lunch almost a dollar. In Berlin I have had *Backhaehndl,* a dream in chicken, delicious beyond words; ineffable *Preisselbeeren;* a cantata in whipped cream called strawberry bomb; and a jug of honest wine, all for one mark and twenty *Pfennige,* or about thirty cents. But I have to pay two cents for butter!

We Americans always expect something for nothing. We are a nation of grafters. We have not yet mentally digested that the *least* is always the *most* expensive. We pay most dearly for what costs us nothing. Besides, we are in the habit of continually wasting money by paying for things we don't want, or don't get, merely because others presumably want them and get them. We have an idea lodged somewhere in our cranium that money is easily made, because at the touch of some modern Midas watered stock turns to gold. Albeit few of us are initiates in his secret, we are

tempted to emulate the munificence of his household. We live within his means, not ours.

The average American, like the savage, makes no provision for the future. The mind of the twelve-dollar clerk, oblivious to the actual value of money, refuses to grasp that a dollar is the symbol of half a day's wearisome drudgery. And all sense of the significance of the individual greenback is lost in a roseate mist when his salary climbs up to the dazzling height of twenty-five *per*. We have yet to learn the rudimentary fact that the value of a coin fluctuates continually as it wanders from one man's hand to another's. We are, in consequence, the most wasteful of nations. Wasteful of nerve-juice and sweat, equally wasteful of forests and nature's multiple bounties. Far from being a business-like people, we wallow like hogs in our transient abundance.

Here is waste everywhere. In the Berlin subway—to instance a significant illustration of municipal economy—every man is his own conductor. This I suspect to be a devious method on the part of the State to cultivate in its subjects the military virtue of self-reliance. In American cities, the conductor sneezes, coughs, or makes some other inarticulate sound when the train approaches the station. To interpret these catarrhal noises in intelligible terms well-nigh exhausts the imagination. There are no plainly marked stations as in Berlin; and who would dare address a conductor? His

primary function, apparently, is to impress upon us in uncouth colloquial gabble the urgency of dispatch. Sometimes he jabs us.

On the subway trains of the German metropolis there are no conductors,—neither is there danger to life and limb. There is no obscene crowding, there is no strap-hanging—modern substitutes for mediæval institutions of torture. When a car is filled to its capacity no avaricious syndicate attempts to disprove the truth still maintained by the physicists that two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time.

Well may a sense of personal grievance intrude upon the calmness of my philosophic reflection: the New York subway system has snatched from me, (at Ninety-sixth Street), the best-beloved of sweethearts! How well I remember the tragic occurrence! Fate has engraved each detail on my brain with her indelible pencil! A sea of human agony pressed upon us from all sides. Suddenly she was gone! One last glimpse of her beckoning hands! One last swish of departing silks! A muffled cry,—I cannot explain it, being neither H. G. Wells, nor Jules Verne,—and the hungry jaws of incomprehensible void had closed upon her. She had actually been crushed out of known space, and disappeared into the fourth dimension. Now, in Berlin, the police would not permit such a thing to happen, because "it is strengthily undersaid" to leave the platform without

having delivered one's ticket to the Cerberus at the gate.

We are wastrels of time in bar-room and club, but we risk our lives to save a minute in locomotion. The German law, unlike our own, does not regard suicide as a punishable offense, but at least it saves you, even against yourself, from being murdered—by inches—in a crowded car. However annoying it may be to be compelled to wait until the next train rolls leisurely into the station, saintship does thereby hold out its crown to you: you may practise the Christian virtue of patience. Your misery, moreover, is not uncompanioned. But if you are in a hurry a second-class compartment will hospitably receive you on payment of an additional obolus. Mortals less fortunate travel third. The system comprising two classes, even in city traffic, is an excellent thing, excellent from your point of view, commendable also from the point of view of your financial inferior, to whom plush seats are not indispensable.

The democratic delusion of equality and mob-rule has not yet addled the brains of Europe. Abroad even the Socialist is not convinced in his heart that "all men are created free and equal." But people respect your personality and your comfort. They do not ask you to twist your body, made in the image of God, into ludicrous shapes as you hang to a strap. But they boldly affirm the rights of man—as distinguished from woman. I

devoutly believe in the rights of woman. I even uphold universal suffrage, irrespective of the vulgar distinction of either age or sex, limited merely by a severe educational test. I believe in votes for children as well as for women, provided they have the brains. But I vigorously resent the monstrous attempt of the American female to usurp man's rights without man's duties, without, moreover, relinquishing her prerogatives as a woman. In Berlin every car has a special compartment for smokers. We refuse to grant to the male that last refuge, but, absurdly enough, institute special cars for the ladies—a startling flashlight into the feminine character of our vaunted American "civilization."

We fondly imagine that we are a practical people. We invent time- and labor-saving machines. Our ingenuity, however, deserts us when it comes to making life more pleasant. We should all like to live in houses with elevators, but insolvency stands at the gate like an irate angel. The ordinary elevator is a monstrous thing, devouring space and service. But the wizards of Berlin have installed in dwellings hardly larger than a Nuremberg toy house, lilliputian lifts commensurate with their size. Electricity ingeniously applied supplants the attendant. A good fairy disguised as the landlady presents every tenant with a magic key. When it is slipped into the keyhole the elevator promptly answers your summons. The

door swings open to welcome you, and the moment you step on the mat within, a cunning device turns on the electric light. The brain-endowed elevator halts at your floor; you close a partition, and—presto!—down it goes of its own accord.

Profiting by the mishap of the hero of the Arabian Nights, the municipality subjects you to an examination of your ability to pronounce the magical Sesame before the key is entrusted into your keeping. But the whole affair is so simple and so safe that a child can learn it all without special instruction. Rents are high in Berlin, comparatively speaking, but many people can afford to live in elevator houses over there, who wouldn't dream of it here. And yet I feel sure that in our city houses, honeycombed with apartments, thousands of women are annually crippled or killed by climbing too many stairs.

There are few things beyond our reach if we are determined to get them. But where shall we look for guidance? Our instincts are wavering and vulgar. We are the *parvenu* among nations. Our children's children may, perhaps, acquire reverence, refinement and polish. But there are things one can only inherit. The atmosphere of a place cannot be bartered for so many pieces of silver. We can purchase with our gold pigeons of the color of grapes, and of the color of slate-quarries. We can pauperize them as we pauperize the squirrel. We can make them docile, until

they nestle upon the palm of our hand. But we cannot duplicate the Place of St. Mark in Venice.

Æsthetic values are connotative. There is a picturesqueness in Europe that one looks for in vain in a newly-made country. Take the lovely swans on the Alster in Hamburg. How lordly they circle upon the river, fed by delicate Ledas from the casements of restaurants by the water. And in winter the seagulls are there. Myriads and myriads of them. And there is an old man who makes his living by selling fish to feed them. You cannot help thinking of Heine watching the birds and perchance writing a melancholy sonnet about them. This is the city where he felt most at home. It is strange that he should never have sung of its loveliest aspect.

But the weirdest thing in Hamburg is its wonderful mists. They rise from the ground like a thin veil until they swallow the city—*Rathaus,* Alster and all. I had a curious thrill watching a group of children playing on the lawn while slowly, with mist-embroidered wings, the afternoon faded into the dusk. At first the milk-white veil barely touched their feet. They were like angel-boys in some Raphael painting, dancing on clouds at the knees of God. When I looked again, the chilling breath of the fog had enveloped them, as the Erl-King in Goethe's ballad envelops the dying lad. Higher and higher rose the white doom. At last I could only faintly distinguish

their figures: they seemed like children frolicking in blissful unconsciousness at the bottom of the sea. Then they disappeared altogether.

They must have caught cold. I am sure the fog is unhealthy. But beauty is apt to be.

CHAPTER III

THE STATE IDEA

We have compared ourselves to the Romans. I, myself, have endorsed that comparison. But I am afraid we flatter ourselves. We are undeniably resourceful and mighty. Our dominion is wider than Rome's. We can match the Appian Way. We even have a sort of Cæsar. That is what the French call him, and not without justice. Cæsar was Rome. America, through Europe's glasses, is Roosevelt. *We,* recognizing the real master in his dual disguise, bow to Rockefeller and Morgan. On the Continent Rockefeller's memoirs met with scant success. Roosevelt's books *went.*

Like Cæsar, Roosevelt is a historian. The future will speak of both as popular leaders. Greek students will perhaps employ the Greek equivalent of the term. Perhaps every statesman must be a demagogue. And every prophet a charlatan. Theodore, like the great Julius, is intensely theatrical, and intensely—convulsively—dynamic. Both men believed in their star. Both men, after startling domestic exploits, submerged themselves

temporarily in the African jungle. Roosevelt, like Cæsar, has hunted big game. But not as big as Cæsar's. He has founded no kingdom by the Nile; nor followed the river to its mystical sources. And there was no Cleopatra. That would take more imagination than Mr. Roosevelt possesses. He has slain lions, instead, and penned laborious articles, at a dollar a word, for the *Outlook* and *Scribner's*.

Intangible values are beyond us all. That is why we adore individuals, not ideas. We worship Roosevelt. But detest "My policies." The invisible world is not for us. We have no use for abstract ideals. That is where the Barbarian pops up. We might well learn a lesson from the scroll of the Jews. They have been loyal for four thousand years to an imaginary kingdom. Perhaps their children will bequeath to America, in token of gratitude, the fine idealism that still, at least in prayer, turns their eyes to Jerusalem. Until that spirit shall have impregnated our system, we shall be inferior to Rome.

The Romans, too, were a practical people. But the Roman brain conceived of at least one great abstraction: the State Idea—Rome's greatest bequest to the world. The Roman law is only its offspring. The State was even greater than Cæsar. He was great, and his successors were great by identifying themselves with this idea. The majesty of the Emperor is the majesty of the

State. An insult to him is an insult to all. Hence *lése majesté.* Every Roman owed allegiance to this abstraction. The moment we believe in an abstraction, we project it into reality. "*Civis Romanus sum*" was the most *tangible* thing in Roman civilization.

We remember our citizenship only in trouble—when we've made fools of ourselves abroad. We, too, no doubt have public-spirited men. We are more generous than Europe. We give billions to libraries. To universities. Churches. Hospitals. But not, willingly, one cent to the State. Who ever dreams of paying the public debt? On the contrary. We don't mind "doing" the State. We swear off taxes. We perjure ourselves at the Custom House. In our heart of hearts, we approve of illicit rebates. We attach no blame to municipal thievery. We wouldn't abstract a penny from another man's pocketbook. But we'd all like to take millions out of the State's. The State Idea eludes our brains. We are shamed by the beehive. Vainly have we watched with unintelligent eyes, from the day that we swung in the trees by our tails, the government of the anthill.

Where the State Idea crystallizes in the executive function, we actually fear it. A great national party opposes every extension of federal power. Our Constitution decentralizes the government. We resent its tangible presence. Even

benevolent state compulsion revolts us. That is one reason why we oppose direct taxation. We prefer to pay twice the amount indirectly. For the same reason we shall never be Socialists. The scarlet flower of Socialism thrives only upon the soil of the State Idea. We are, most of us, unconscious anarchs. We believe in the greatest individual freedom, in universal *laissez faire,*—except where it is absolutely defensible: in the sphere of sex and individual morals.

Abroad there is a greater laxity in these matters. But rigorous laws regulate everything else. The very rigor of the law makes for greater freedom. A distinct line exists between the permissible and the unlawful. Here we are all at sea. There are so many contradictory laws that no man knows where he stands. The execution of the law is left to individual caprice. Much depends on the temper of the District Attorney and the state of judicial livers.

If all the laws on our statute books were carried out for a single day, the land would be depopulated. We would all be in jail. Abroad I know that the State will make me do certain things. But I may sleep peacefully at night. I need not fear to wake up a convict. There are no legal pitfalls. Here all is uncertain. We all walk on quicksands.

The moment you enter your hotel abroad, the paw of the State is raised. The hotel clerk, trans-

formed for the nonce into the instrument of a sovereign power, with gesture grand presents you with an ominous slip. Lots of questions are printed on it. It's a sort of examination sheet. Where do you come from? What do you want? What's your business? How old are you? And what's your religion? My traveling companions were furious at this in Hamburg, and almost speechless in Berlin. The City of Berlin followed them argus-eyed to their private lodgings. Failure to report their presence, we learned, would have subjected the landlady to a fine. Before twice twenty-four hours had elapsed inspectors would have been hot upon their trail.

One young man wanted to leave for home at once, or, as Schiller would say, "to behold Germany with his back." He had been requested to present himself personally to the police. So far as I know, there was nothing against him. He is nice, clean, upright; quite a likable chap. I know —I ought to; for, to tell the truth, that young man was *me*. I am fully aware that this is bad grammar; but in moments of extreme suspense the elegancies of diction desert us.

Resistance being futile, I obeyed the summons. But my feet became frigid. My heart "fell into my trousers"—that is how the Germans phrase it. Not that I was conscious of any crime. But you can never tell! There are so many laws. And alone! In a foreign land! The police inspector

looked me over, not unkindly. He asked a few questions. He nodded. And all was over. My landlady was surprised to see me come back. It was so obvious that I felt hurt. I am sure she had taken me for at least a murderer, or the fugitive second vice president of some financial concern.

I had brought the trouble upon my own head by designating myself as a "Fire-worshiper." I had in mind, no doubt, the Divine Fire; but in Germany fire worship is not recognized by the State. With reluctant hand, I substituted the legally accepted term—"Lutheran"—for my fiery Credo.

One of my fellow-passengers had a harder time of it than I—the lady with the pathetic eyes. I *knew* misfortune was flapping its somber wings over her head. She had registered as a Quaker. The policeman thought she was jesting unduly: in German the word is the onomatopœia for the musical sounds that rise with reiterative insistence on moonlit nights from the frog pond. Unfortunately neither understood the language of the other. The poor girl was terribly frightened when the bluecoat threatened to arrest her for insulting an officer, an instrument of the State.

I regarded the situation with philosophic composure. The troubles of others leave us extraordinarily calm. Finally my good nature prevailed. The girl's friends were angry with the German Empire, until the joke dawned upon them.

It never dawned upon *her*. The deeper significance of the incident had, however, impressed itself upon me. I no longer resented the solicitude of the government. Far from it: I felt pleased, touched, elated, moved to tears, yes—and flattered, that the German Empire and the City of Berlin should be so anxious about *me*.

There was something personal in this interest. It was cordial. I felt Germania had taken us to her ample bosom. She protected us. We had become members of her imperial household. Her concern in us was benign. Her questions were the natural curiosity of a friend. Our names are now filed at police headquarters. If we get into trouble, they'll make a cross against our names. They keep tab on our movements.

I admit that powerful arguments may be advanced against the system from the point of view of the thug. However, every net has its meshes. Criminals have escaped even from Moabit. The escapades of the Hauptmann of Köpenik have split the sides of the world with laughter. But the Black Hand will never make its headquarters in Berlin. No Mafia will there raise its head; no band of ruffians establish a reign of terror.

The German registry system prevails in most continental cities. It is annoying until you grasp it. Ultimately you walk about with a new sense of security. The European merchant princes need never pillow their calculating heads above a loaded

revolver. The forces of the State are arrayed to protect them. It's all the difference between civilization and barbarism. I thought of it when I saw *An Englishman's Home,*—in the scene where the invading army first enters the house, and Mr. Brown, the landlord, angrily calls: "Police!" Ridiculous? Yes. But also sublime.

Everywhere is the eye of that big abstraction, the State. It is obeyed even when its vigilance relaxes. I have said that the subway trains had second- and third-class compartments. The tickets are differently colored. But there is hardly any control once you are on the platform. At first I felt tempted to enter a second-class compartment with a third-class ticket. We are accustomed to countenance breaches of the eighth commandment, except in personal business transactions. Let not the Gibson- and the Christy-Girls elevate their haughty brows. They are hardened offenders. A corporation isn't a person. So we don't feel bound to be honest with it. Now, in Germany you'd be regarded as a common thief if you omitted to pay your fare. Honesty there is not virtue, but habit. Obedience to law is second nature. Factory owners, strange to say, are habitually careful of human life. We have not outgrown the heathen idea that so many pieces of silver atone for a human life. We find murder cheaper than caution.

Abroad regulations are stringent. But the

State threatens no one with a year's imprisonment and a fine of five hundred dollars for trivial offenses. In the state of New York, by a curious freak of statute, the penalty for adultery is half that for spitting in a street-car. Obviously, spitting is more tempting to the average American than the allurements of Venus. In Europe adultery is a pleasant diversion. No gentleman, however, expectorates in the street. The severity of the law is reserved for important transgressions.

The Tentacle of the Octopus, the youthful hireling of the Standard Oil, recalled my attention to certain significant facts. The columns of smoke writhing like graceful serpents out of factory chimneys are indeed poison-fanged adders. Death lurks in the breath of their nostrils. "At home," the youth confided to me, "I don't care what becomes of the chemicals that escape with the smoke. In Austria, where I am going to found a plant, we are compelled to convert them into innocuous vapors."

The Tentacle wriggled with wrath.

"May not the vapors be turned into useful by-products?" I asked. "Man extracts gold from water. Can he wrest no treasure from smoke?"

"Certainly," he replied, with a contemptuous shrug. "But we don't bother about it. We don't think there's enough in it."

The benefit to the community would be incalculable. Children's lungs would no longer be filled

with corruption. But the benefit to him as an individual and to the corporation as such was too small. So he swallowed his share of the poison with Socratic composure. We are all free and equal to swallow it.

We'd move heaven and earth to help a cripple. We'd all chip in for a hungry child. But we don't mind poisoning hundreds and thousands of children daily and hourly. Children in the abstract fail to move us to pity. We are a nation of Herods. But Herod had reason for slaying the little ones. And he slew them mercifully and quickly. We have divers methods of murder.

Our favorite mode of infanticide is asphyxiation. We take air and light from our babies till they languish like starved little plants. Economy is commendable. The Germans are thrifty enough. But they will not let sky-scrapers blot out the sun. The height of a house must be proportionate to the width of the street. They go even further than that. In certain residential sections you are not permitted to put up a house at all unless you follow a prescribed architectural style. Art for once wields a bludgeon, exacting subservience to an æsthetic abstraction. She harmonizes individual eccentricities. In Europe each town is an entity: our municipalities are jumbles of iron and stone gazing squint-eyed at heaven.

If the State fathers its subjects, the community mothers them. One city, Schoeneberg-by-Berlin,

has entered into a secret compact with Herr Stork. Every stork in Schoeneberg drops a bank-book on the window-sill when it does its duty. The city presents every baby with a bank account —not a fat one, to be sure. Only one mark, bearing interest at four per cent. But it is supposed to grow nice and fat with the baby. If you happen to be a million-dollar baby anyway, you are twenty-five cents more to the good. If you are not, your wee little foot is placed at least on the first rung of the ladder of high finance.

Where happiness reigns, health is the twin of wealth. The circulation of the blood is more important than the circulation of money. The State paternally enforces its sanitary demands. If disease eats your marrow, the forbidding countenance of the State assumes the benignant smile of a Good Samaritan. When old age has weakened your limbs, the inexorable gatherer of taxes will replenish your pockets. The United States, in a similar predicament, conjures up the specter of national bankruptcy. We are too poor to be humane. We must spend half of our national income on battleships. What would we say to a boy who invested half his lunch-money in boxing-gloves? We would actually rather deal death to others than make living more pleasant for ourselves. England's bill for Dreadnoughts is even greater than ours. Nevertheless, she has her old-age pensions. Germany has a wonderful system of compulsory in-

surance. If the German owes service to the State, he, in turn, is not unrewarded. The State owes him some compensation—some kind of decent old age.

I may not have gotten my figures right, and my dates may be inexact, but the idea is this. If you make less than two thousand marks a year, you are compelled to provide through insurance against the three-headed monster—accident, age, and disease. Your employer pays one-half of the expense. You pay the other half. When you are old and cannot work any more, you get your pension. The State sees to that. The State presents you with an additional annual bonus of fifty marks. This payment, insufficient in itself, establishes the principle of reciprocal obligation between the nation and you.

If you work in an industrial concern where there is some danger, and your annual income is less than three thousand marks, your employer must pay the premium on your accident policy. Suppose you work in a factory where you have been earning twelve hundred marks, and you are hurt. At once the State comes to your rescue. A respectable hospital opens its doors to you. Your family receives financial assistance. If you are totally disabled, an annual pension of eight or nine hundred marks assures your daily subsistence. And if you should die, your widow will receive a pension of over six hundred marks for the

remainder of her natural life. If she decides to marry again, the State cheerfully presents her with a substantial bonus, and still contributes to the expense of educating your children. You don't have to sue anybody to get your money. You don't have to accept a meager settlement and divide with a rascally lawyer. And whether you want it or not, you are insured. You have nothing to say in the matter. Neither has your boss. Probably your wages will suffer a little, but at least you are safe from the poorhouse. With all her military enthusiasm, Germany is not unmindful of her soldiers of peace, the veterans of her industrial army.

We do not even pension our officials. Recently the secretary of one of our embassies retired from public life. He had served his country I do not know how many years. The snows of seven decades had fallen on his hair. His back was bent, his strength exhausted. Yet he would have been exposed to actual want if a group of prosperous financiers had not discharged from their private fortunes the indebtedness of the Commonwealth. We love to brag of our generosity. But we are niggardly as a nation. We underpay our public servants in office, and out of office we starve them. We subject our ambassadors to humiliation in foreign capitals. We pay starvation wages to our Secretary of State; and force our ex-presidents to seek refuge in Africa or the almshouse.

CHAPTER IV

"S. M."

"S. M." is written across the map of Europe. It flares from the century's forehead. It is a magic key to the German heart. S. M.—*Seine Majestät*—is the vernacular for the Kaiser.

S. M. is a wonderful person. He pervades all Germany. He is everywhere. He is a great man —perhaps the greatest contemporaneous figure. Surely the greatest riddle.

Men, I have said, are ideas incarnate. And besides our natural parents, we have spiritual progenitors to whom we are born in mystical marriage. Strange bedfellows breed strange offspring. The fruit of the marriage between Faust and Helen was Euphorion, a spirit of unstable and rarefied composition. When the Twentieth Century wedded the Middle Ages, William II flashed into life. Euphorion was not of the earth; in him antagonistic elements were but imperfectly blended. William II is cast in enduring mould; a felicitous force has clinched the diverse meaning of two inimical epochs in the brilliant paradox of his being.

Logic, unaided, cannot fathom the mystery of William II. I have always worshiped the Sphinx. I even had a *liaison* with it once. Then I thought I understood it. I didn't. But it is easier to understand than the Kaiser. Woman is an open book as compared with him. And it really isn't difficult for the Sphinx to be mysterious. Its greatest mystery is its silence. But the Kaiser isn't silent. He makes speeches—many of them. We may interview, snapshot, and paint him: he still leaves us puzzled.

William II reconciles in his person the most incongruous traits. He is the most impulsive of reigning monarchs. There can be no doubt about that. Yet he is almost Machiavellian in premeditation. That telegram to Kruger was impulsive—and yet how carefully calculated! And prepared at the Foreign Office! Shrewd observers say that the historical interview in the *Daily Telegraph* had been no less carefully launched. And that the hubbub attendant upon its publication furthered some far-seeing plan.

At the time, it will be remembered, a cyclone broke loose in German editorial ink-pots. And, behold! William, the imperious, humbly bowed his head. Perhaps he smiled to himself somewhat sadly. But he said nothing. *Simplicissimus,* in one of its cartoons, replaced the imperial eagle over the entrance to the Foreign Office by another bird, not famed for discretion. And then, one

morning, through a miracle of sudden enlightenment, the German people perceived with a gasp that the greatest defeats of the Kaiser were victories in disguise.

And yet the Kaiser is not a hypocrite. He is temperamentally incapable of deceit. But there is no explanation. We must simply accept him as two distinct personalities. He is monarchical to the bone. Yet it was he who opposed Bismarck's anti-Socialist legislation. He is the official head of the Protestant church in Prussia, yet Roman ritual and Rome possesses for him a strange fascination. He loves pomp, but his children are reared with bourgeois simplicity. His preoccupation is war; he, nevertheless, is the stanchest champion of peace. He hates the English, and he loves the English. He is a mystic and a rationalist. His inclinations are mediæval, but he is more intimately familiar with the technical intricacies of a modern gunboat than are his own engineers. He would be capable of restoring an ancient castle, famed of minnesingers, and of establishing wireless telephony on its ramparts. He is the only man who could do this without being absurd, because he is, as I have asserted, the sole legitimate offspring of Romanticism and Modernity.

Of his two natures, one belongs to the Twentieth Century, one to the Middle Ages. One is despotic, one democratic. One hates the English, one loves them. One talks freely,—perhaps too freely;

one is silent as the sepulcher. The Inquisition itself was not more secretive. Peace lights on his right, hounds of war are leashed to his left. There are two Kaisers, both of whom labor for the benefit of the realm, each in his separate way.

By this duality William II is the authentic exponent of modern Europe. In Europe today the war between Science and Faith wages more fiercely than ever. The wolf of Modernism has invaded even the fold of St. Peter. The lives of most Europeans are absurd because they have not yet found the equation between the Old and the New. Faith and Science live unreconciled, in one bosom, like two inimical brothers. Even we who are a century behind European thought begin to vibrate with the conflict. Perhaps Professor James is the prophet who shall lead us out of the wilderness.

A parallel problem is presented in Europe by the incessant conflict between the monarchical idea and republicanism. Mediæval institutions coexist with democratic institutions. It seems preposterous that people who can think for themselves should not also govern themselves. Yet no small part of the strength of Europe roots in the mediæval. Something of this struggle, modified by our environment, is going on in America. The government in Washington steadily tightens its grip, while the steer of democracy raises its ominous horns.

We live in a curiously transitional period. Probably authentic democracy lies at the end of the road. I should prefer some transfigured aristocracy. The greatest individual development is perhaps possible under a cultured tyrant. He is the man of destiny. His brain is the scroll of the *Zeitgeist.*

Most modern monarchs compromise either too much or too little. Great Britain having disposed of the only logical basis of royalty, the divine right of kings, her ruler exercises primarily an ornamental, æsthetic function. The Tsar, on the other hand, entrenched behind prejudice and tradition, lives in constant dread of nitro-glycerine protests. The problem facing the world to-day is the readjustment between the passing order and the new order. The mental unrest has invaded even Asia Minor. When Abdul Hamid vainly tortured his wits for a solution to the question vexing the world, the monster, Sphinx-like, hurled him into the abyss.

The giant Modernity everywhere shakes his fist against the lavendered glory of mediæval tradition, impotent to obliterate its immemorial traces. William II is the living incarnation of this great contradiction. He is logical, because he is illogical. He is the only logical monarch in Europe. He is an ideal Kaiser. He is in tune with the *Zeitgeist.* If Germany were to be declared a republic to-day, and a president had to be chosen,

the unanimous choice of the people would be William II.

America could never have produced William II. We lack the glamor of the Middle Ages. We have inherited only their shadows—their intolerance of the flesh and their hatred of beauty. Not ours the halo of tradition. We have sometimes compared the Kaiser to Roosevelt. I, myself, am an admirer of Roosevelt. But to liken him to the Kaiser is like comparing a phonograph to a nightingale. It may imitate the nightingale bravely, but there is something missing. No mechanical ingenuity can conceal its absence. There must be some secret property defying investigation, like the *timbre* of an old instrument—perhaps some quality of the blood.

I wonder if the blood of kings is really like other men's? What a pity no one took the trouble to examine the blood of Louis Capet when he parted company with his head! Perhaps it was not blue, after all. We would need a psychic microscope to discover the truth. We know that a king's head may be wrung like a carl's. Even imperial legs grow heavy with gout. And the abdomen is dreadfully democratic. As Nietzsche says, it always reminds us that we are human. But the brain, ah! that is different. Not anatomically. A woman's brain is almost as large as a man's. And wasn't it Lombroso who couldn't tell, on one occasion, the brain of a genius from that of an idiot?

But there is something else. There must be. It lurks in the brain-cells. Some memory—the real self. A brain where the notion of the divine right of monarchs has been rooting for generations must be different from the brains of other men.

No mean man, it is said, has ever been President. The majesty of the office is such that, like Christ, it heals the leper. Even a confirmed kleptomaniac will renounce his nefarious habits when fate has made him lord of the White House. Yet the President's reign is brief. He is often elected by doubtful methods. The King receives his crown out of the hand of God. It has descended to him from his sires. It will pass from him to his sons. He is porphyrogene. He rules not for a period of years, but forever. The King cannot die. In the animal kingdom, the insignia of royalty are corporeal. The queen-bee differs from her hive in appearance. Human distinctions are subtler, but no less real. Any young bee may, if sufficiently fed, develop into a queen. Generations of careful selection are needed to evolve a ruler of men. The king, of necessity, differs from his people. The process of evolution has endowed him with peculiar functions for the business of kingship. This heritage alone would have stamped William II as a remarkable ruler. But he is also a genius.

"William II," one of his intimate friends im-

pressed upon me with conviction, "would have been conspicuous in any profession. If a cobbler, he would have been a master cobbler." He is versatile, myriad-minded—strategist, poet, musician, diplomatist, huntsman, painter and engineer. Nero tried his hand at some of these things. But it cost him his head. Frederick the Great dabbled in verse. But it was wretched verse. The Kaiser's endeavors in manifold fields would have made several reputations for men of lesser caliber. But he still remains, above all, the Kaiser.

The Prussia of Frederick the Great was less isolated than the German Empire in certain critical periods under the present régime. To-day she plays the leading fiddle in the Concert of Powers. The luminous figure of William II dominates the earth. The shadow of his sword paralyzes the British lion. But, unlike Frederick the Great, William the Great has accomplished his victories without bloodshed. For one and twenty years he has been Lord of Peace. The Seven Years' War was surely a wonderful thing. But what shall we say to a three times Seven Years' Peace?

Germany is divided into two camps: those who follow the Kaiser blindly, and those who oppose him blindly. There is no neutral ground. I have a sneaking suspicion that even the Socialists secretly adore William II. If Bebel were the Chief Executive of a German Democracy, he would

make the Kaiser his Chancellor. Even the Opposition draws its life from the negation of him.

The Kaiser's personal charm is more potent than that of Circe. Unlike Circe, he turns his admirers not into swine, but into patriots. Like Julius Cæsar, William II can be all things to all men. He is a brilliant conversationalist, and as he listens to you he seems to enter into your mind. Yet all the while, *his* mind is a garrisoned fortress. The portals are closely guarded. Never a word passes his lips unchallenged. Caution is posted on the tip of his tongue. That, I believe, is the secret of rulers of men.

It is almost incredible what sacrifices Germans, hard men of business, will make for one smile from his imperial lips. There is August Scherl, the German newspaper king. Mr. Scherl controls the syndicate publishing the Berlin *Lokalanzeiger.* Formerly this sheet might have been designated as ultra-yellow. Suddenly Mr. Scherl reverses his policy, and deliberately makes his paper, politically, the dullest in Berlin. The whisper had reached his ear that the Emperor read it: let no offensive opinion provoke a wrinkle on His Majesty's forehead! The circulation, however, continued to soar. Suppressing its yawns, Berlin still religiously peruses the *Lokalanzeiger's* castrated pages. "You see," the German explains, half apologetically, half with the pardonable pride of sharing, in a sense, the mental pabulum

of his ruler, "S. M. reads it; I. M. (*Ihre Majestät,* Her Majesty), also."

And yet it is all a myth. Far be it from me to affirm that the Kaiser never reads the *Lokalanzeiger.* He is indeed an omnivorous reader. All the new magazines find their way to his table. His desk is strewn with a bewildering variety of publications. Sometimes, no doubt, he even sees August Bebel's radical mouthpiece, the *Vorwärts.* It is all nonsense, of course, that his news-dispatches are "doctored." William II would brook no such interference. He picks up information wherever he likes. But being a busy man, he has his news "romeiked," to employ a new verb, coined, I believe, by Richard Le Gallienne. The *Wilhelmstrasse* supplies him regularly with clippings on every imaginable topic of interest. And finally the *Fürstenkorrespondenz,* a sort of *Literary Digest* for Princes, supplies him with the epitome of the daily news and excerpts from editorials. I do not think, however, that he lets that brilliant but venomous reptile, the *Zukunft,* coil up on his desk.

The mention of Maximilian Harden's unmentionable magazine recalls to my mind one of the blackest chapters in the history of the German people. Harden's one object in life has been to play the *advocatus diaboli* to William II. At the time of the Eulenburg scandal and subsequently, when the Kaiser's Anglophile interview exploded

with bomb-like concussion, it seemed almost as if the editor of the *Zukunft* had planted his sting. The cyclonic excitement over the interview was largely the after-effect of Harden's revelations concerning the alleged "camarilla."

The so-called "camarilla" owes its existence solely to the gossip of demagogues and of lackeys. The "Round Table" is a malicious invention. Men of Prince zu Eulenburg's temperament are found frequently in all walks of life. Like many obviously minor poets, he is incurably romantic. It is only natural that he should have been attracted, as the moth to the flame; by the splendid and virile personality of the monarch whom he served with mediæval devotion. Count Kuno von Moltke is a man of culture in the sense of the author of *Marius the Epicurean.* He has Nietzsche and Goethe at his finger-tips. Harden needlessly and unjustly dragged his name through the mire, wrecking his happiness to no purpose.

Eulenburg's case is still undecided. He seems to have stumbled over a breath—a word—call it perjury if you will. Harden's clever journalistic machinations have spread the erroneous impression that he has proved his case: he hasn't. Eulenburg, hounded almost to death by Harden's sensational persecution, may never again be able to speak in his own defense. Harden, however, stands morally convicted of treason to his country, and, incidentally, to his own scientific convictions.

He has passed judgment upon himself. His weekly mental acrobatics, scorned by the truly elect, serve to amuse only the intellectual gallery. To the majority of the German public he is no longer a martyr. The shield of the Hohenzollern gleams brighter than ever. His absolute independence of irresponsible advisers and his political sagacity are no longer questioned.

Like Frederick the Great in his time, William II is the cynosure of the world. His seal is graven upon the Book of Life perhaps more deeply than Bismarck's. Still, there must be bitterness in his heart when he remembers the immediate past. I thought of it in Potsdam when I retraced the steps of his great progenitor.

Potsdam, the Kaiser's favorite residence, is intimately associated with memories of Frederick the Great. It means much more to the German than Washington's headquarters means to us. Washington had many headquarters. His appetite, apparently, was terrific. He seems to have stopped at every road-house between New York and Philadelphia, and to have slept in innumerable places.

The picturesque is conspicuously absent in our history. We haven't much of a history, anyway. There is the story of the Cherry Tree and the Declaration of Independence, a couple of wars, and Lincoln's assassination. For me, American history begins with Poe, not with Plymouth; not

with the Constitution, but with *Annabel Lee.* Everything seems too near. We are dreadfully unromantic. Perhaps that is the reason why native historical art fails to impress us. Who would be moved by the statue of the Father of his Country, standing in what seems to be a bathing suit, on top of a pole in the Capital?

Frederick the Great and Washington were contemporaries. I cannot think of Washington without smiling.

In Potsdam I felt the weight of the centuries, and that a wonderful spirit had dwelt there. The little house where lived Voltaire, his dearest literary friend, somehow gave me a curious thrill. And with a chuckle I thought of the cruel things he said about Frederick's verse.

I mounted the terrace that leads to the unpretentious hall where Frederick himself had presided over his minions, smoking tobacco and saying acute things in French. And I saw in the twilight the pool on which Frederick had set his heart, and which had never been completed in his lifetime, owing to the miscalculations of a stupid contractor. And there, in the shadow beyond, was the Historic Mill, whose owner had flaunted defiance in the face of the King. How they all hampered him in little things—the philosopher, and the miller, and the rascal who made a mess of the pool! How like their descendants!

Night had fallen over the trees. Wistfully the

moon smiled from above. Through the green foliage peered the pallid faces of statues, archers and Ganymedes, and delicate breasts bathed in moonlight. Seven little tombstones beckoned and gleamed from afar. "These," remarked my companion, like myself an admirer of Frederick the Great, "these are the graves of his greyhounds. Despairing of men, he turned for solace to them."

Frederick had ordained in his will that the faithful hounds should be buried at his side. Even that last wish was denied him. To me, these graves are the most pathetic things in the world. In the history of sorrow there is no page more sorrowful and more sweet. I wonder if the Kaiser sometimes thinks of Frederick and his greyhounds?

All great men are sad at heart. I can imagine the Kaiser, wrapped in a military cloak, standing there of a night and evoking in spirit the seven little ghosts of the hounds. Germany has forgotten how in a moment of hysterical agitation she trod his love underfoot. William II is great enough to forget. But surely, sometimes, like the smart of an old wound, the memory comes to him by the seven little graves in the gardens of Potsdam.

CHAPTER V

THE PHILOSOPHY OF MILITARISM

SOMEWHERE in Germany there is a warrant sworn out for my apprehension. Somewhere the Public Prosecutor peers across the sea with a spyglass. The German Empire, strangely enough, regards me still as her subject. She clings to me with the tenacity of a woman. I think she accuses me of desertion. A uniform, spick and span, and with brass buttons, is waiting for me. But I don't want it. I'd rather wear my blue serge suit. And, of course, it's all a mistake. I have politely informed Madame that I am an American citizen, and that she can not, can really not, count upon me.

It isn't surprising that she carries my name on her list. It seems I was born between 1884 and 1885 in the city of Munich. The event is said to have occurred on New Year's Eve. So, in a way, I have fallen between two stools. Future historians will have small difficulty in proving that I wasn't born at all. I don't want to be too definite about it. The lives of poets should be delightfully vague. The greatest poets are shrouded in mystery. The author of Shakespeare's plays, it seems,

never existed. And seven cities vie for the honor of having given birth to a person named Homer, who is alleged to have written the *Iliad.*

Let two continents wrestle for me.

Henceforth shall I shun the detective camera. Like d'Annunzio, I shall sleep in the daytime. I shall endeavor to become a mythical figure like Bernard Shaw. All the elect know Bernard Shaw doesn't exist. It is horribly indiscreet of me to say so, but he is really a hoax. He invented himself. That is one of the reasons why he persistently refuses to startle the United States with his enigmatical presence. All the world loves a bluffer —at least in America. We have raised humbug to a fine art. But we are quick to discern it. Shaw is afraid we'd find out that he is merely a resuscitated epigram of the late Oscar Wilde, dropped by mistake in a volume of Marx.

Already an aura of myths surrounds my head with a nebulous halo. I shall be a legendary figure before I die. That is the reason why I have deliberately courted a bad reputation. It is a valuable asset for a poet of passion. When Swinburne lost it by moving to Putney Hill with Mr. Watts Dunton, the savor went out of his song. I am convinced I shall never lose my evil glamor. I have builded too well for that. And an hundred hands were stretched out to help me. Even if I weary, my friends, I feel sure, will persist in supporting the tottering structure.

I need not dwell here upon the now historical fact that my mother is a native of California. Years before my nativity my father made a lecture tour through the country. The date of *my* first appearance here I have never been able to verify with precision. *Who's Who* places it at the age of eleven. And through all the elapsing years some German magistrate's scribe has conscientiously traced my footprints. Surely the mills of the Government grind exceeding small!

One night I was dined at the house of one of the Big Wigs of the German War Ministry. My host, cultured and genial, like all German officers, talked interestingly of the army. I asked him whether he knew of any general philosophic exposition of militarism. He gave me some books on the subject, which I subsequently pondered with care. I know now how to marshal an army, and how to build bridges across a river, besides various strategic devices. But my knowledge is theoretical, like a young poet's knowledge of sin. And I nowhere discovered the theory of militarism, the philosophic defense of the thing. After all, nothing that exists needs a defense. Pope was right about that.

Of course, it seems preposterous that people should be drilled to riddle each other with bullets. I, for one, don't believe in it. Life to me is a sacred thing. Besides, I'd be afraid to handle a gun. I'd rather have a broken heart than a tooth-

ache. Still, Good, like Evil, inheres in all things. I agree with the Persians who divided the cosmos equally between God and the Devil. We must accept both, and then establish our personal equilibrium. That, it seems to me, is the art of living. Militarism is not wholly the work of the Devil. I cannot picture the Goddess of Peace without a sword. The olive branch of the dove should really be a torpedo. To the German mind no such justification is needed. It is as natural to the German to serve in the army as it is to be born; and those who do not serve might as well never have been born.

One year's compulsory military service is a salutary experience. Most of us are neglectful of exercise. We develop certain sets of muscles, but there is little general training even among college athletes. Systematic and rigorous physical training at a critical age is worth more than millions. The Emperor's service, moreover, keeps the young male, if not out of mischief, at least out of marriage, until the white fires of adolescence sober into the steady warmth of connubial affection. "But," you say, "time is money." Twelve vital months are canceled from your accounts! Yet I should hardly consider them a loss, but a profitable investment, bearing an interest of one thousand per cent. Medical authorities have carefully calculated that compulsory military service lengthens the German average of life by ten years.

H. G. Wells, in one of his yarns, tells of a Time Savings Bank, where futile hours may be deposited, to be drawn upon when necessity or delight prompts us to lengthen the day. I have vainly searched in financial directories for this unique institution. Even J. P. Morgan, master of destinies and of millions, cannot purchase a single minute from Father Time. No Wall Street operator can corner this market. Military service is the only practical Time Savings Bank in existence. After the first substantial deposit, the directors exact small periodic payments when military maneuvers mimic the ire of Mars. Soon expenditures cease altogether, but at the end of your life—or what would have been the end—you can live on the interest.

It has been said that the Prussian schoolmaster won the battles of Frederick the Great. The German army to-day is a national school. Every company is a school class, with recruits as pupils, and officers as instructors. The officers, in turn, receive instruction from their superiors, and the War Academy in Berlin furnishes, so to speak, special post-graduate courses in warfare. Military service is said to increase the efficiency of the young German by twenty-five per cent. Rustic swains return to their homes with new ideas. They learn to apply themselves systematically. They learn manners, respect for their intellectual betters. And, incidentally, also, the use of soap.

The young soldier is a powerful factor in German æsthetics. He is a splash of color on the gray face of the world. His glittering uniform and his bluish cloak, artistically lined with red, are an eloquent plea against insipid civilian Fashion, which has banished gaiety in masculine attire to the comic opera stage. There is nobility in his carriage. His eyes flash fire. He is handsome, being healthy, young, and, in the beginning at least, clean-shaven.

There is something distinctly animalic in bearded faces. Perhaps that is the reason why some women succumb to their spell. The beast in the female responds to the simian reminiscence—atavistic, no doubt—in the male. To me, a bearded man suggests the ancient Assyrian. The dust of the ages seems to nestle in the hirsute projection. I would not be at all surprised if a scarabæus, startled at a touch, were to creep from its somber recesses. Young men should shave clean. Later, when sin and sorrow have dug holes in their cheeks and the years have distorted their lips, it is perhaps well that they should hide their wasted loveliness under a growth of hair.

I have no æsthetic objection to flowing beards in old men, and to a mustache in a father. I couldn't imagine my own father without one. The well developed mustache may epitomize masculine maturity and completeness. But the fragmentary, tooth-brush-like growth many young

Germans affect on their upper lip is perfectly hideous. A young German teacher confided to me that he had grown a beard in order to impress his pupils with a sense of his dignity. He has the face of a cherub, yet he makes himself look like a goat!

Soldiers are garrisoned, as a rule, far from their homes. Regiments are frequently shifted. The soldier thus comes in touch with various parts of the country. Everywhere he acquires new knowledge. He learns to see his own community in its proper perspective. The oneness of the Fatherland dawns upon him. It is an object-lesson in patriotism.

In the past, at least, maneuvers were held alternately in various spots of the country with unavowed ethnic intentions. Some villages, far from the high road, were degenerating. Intermarriages between relatives were the rule. Hydrocephalous children were not infrequent. The presence of the soldiers injected new blood into the shriveled veins of the hamlet. The stork followed frequently. Marriages sometimes. "Nice" people won't approve of this. But it is defensible from the viewpoint of racial ethics. Nature isn't moral, and she has a trick of not waiting for magisterial permits.

The modern railway has largely supplanted the necessity for this system, but it is still a factor in racial development. Remember that all able-

bodied young men are pressed into service, and that they are scattered all over the country. The glad blood leaps in their veins. Courtships are spun everywhere. Many return to wed where they wooed. It is fascinating to reflect how the administrative process that carries young manhood from province to province furnishes a striking parallel to the function of the wind, love-courier from garden to garden in the vegetable domain.

In the ranks of the officers, aristocratic titles prevail. In some regiments only blue blood is accepted at par. The growing power of the *bourgeoisie,* however, is shattering this feudal barrier. I am not democratic, and I cannot say that I hail the change with delight. There is much to be said for blue blood, and old titles, and families with traditions. We estimate a horse by its pedigree, and we value the family tree of a puppy-dog. The same laws of heredity and evolution surely apply to humans. Nobility is the pillar of state and throne. What I have said of the institution of monarchy applies with equal force to the noble. His subsistence to-day is incongruous. But life itself is pregnant with contradictions.

The aristocrat, no doubt, frequently falls short of his standards. But his standards are fine. Not long ago, a cousin of mine, a young lieutenant, scion of one of the oldest families in the country, committed suicide because his superior officer had censured him for some trivial misunderstanding.

His sense of honor was so acutely developed that a word of disapprobation was a death-warrant. Foolish, perhaps. The boy was high-strung, unbalanced.

Recently an American officer was tried before a court-martial for a flagrantly dishonorable act. The sentence passed upon him, being absurdly light, was subsequently overturned by the commander-in-chief. A mistaken sense of *esprit de corps* seems to have blinded his judges. Whatever their motives, whose code of honor was higher, theirs or the dead lad's? To whom would we rather entrust the safety of a country?

The incident, presumably, is not symptomatic. Our officers, I am convinced, are as honorable as any. In Germany, however, certain canons of honor are established immutably. The duel is partly responsible for the German rigor, barbarous at times, in matters relating to honor. It is not a purely military institution, but a practice sanctioned by academic tradition. Insult is not passed over lightly among Germans. We freely hurl, at least in print, insulting epithets at each other. We may not blacken a person's eye, but we blacken his reputation. Yet every time we call a public servant a thief or a liar, the moral standard is lowered. If the president is a liar and the governor a thief, crime seems innocuous. Through constant reiteration, first the word, then the thing itself, impresses us more lightly. Our libel laws

are inefficient. The use of the fist is unsatisfactory, especially as moral heroes are apt to be undersized. A sword scratch is wildly romantic; a bloody nose isn't.

The army, in spite of the preference given in some regiments to titled officers, is a republican institution. It is more democratic than Bebel. There is nothing more democratic. Military service, being incumbent upon all, temporarily levels distinctions of caste. Once they wear "the Emperor's coat," prince and peasant are equals. Even princes of the blood are not spared the tribulations of the poorest lieutenant. Any tendency to uppishness is promptly suppressed.

Where officers and privates belong to the same class, cordial relations are irreconcilable with etiquette. The German officer can afford to make himself democratic, because he is not, so to speak, one of the common people. He cannot lose caste socially by mixing with them as comrades. I remember walking down *Unter den Linden* with my military friend. Every time a common soldier saluted, and it happened with embarrassing frequency, he courteously returned the salute. He had instructed his subordinate officers to be equally attentive. And every salute was a renewed assertion of the unity of the grandiose machinery in which general and private, each in his own way, are of equal importance.

I am an individualist. Yet there are moments

when it is sweet to grow out of the shell of self. There is, perhaps, dangerous intoxication in crowds; to be swayed by the common impulse when the mysterious force psychologists call "mass suggestion" sweeps through the channels of the brain, breaking the flood-gates of mental reserve. Such must be the soldier's experience in war or some great maneuver. Think of a million young souls swearing fealty to one flag, made one by the ties of comradeship and obedience, and a new sense of brotherhood born of common experience!

All the vitality of the nation is there. Passion and youth, brawn and brain, are enthralled by one dominant purpose. How irresistible is this phalanx! What an immense force! What strange hysteria! Only Walt Whitman could depict such emotions, cosmic and sensuous. Even the most confirmed egotist forgets his subjective existence. His heart for the nonce beats in unison with the world's. He is one with the race and the earth. Earth-emotions, Titanic and terrifying, throb in his veins. He can perform miracles of endurance and valor.

Henceforth, if his country calls, he will blindly follow her summons. He will love the Fatherland with a love intensely personal, as one loves a woman. He has experienced an emotion deeper than patriotism, fiercer than lust. Future and past have met in one glance. A subtle change is

wrought within his being. He is the citizen transfigured. Never again will he be quite what he has been—like a child who, having strayed in the wold, has had converse with fairies. Like the lover to whom passion has revealed its ultimate secret. Like the prophet who has seen God in a bush.

CHAPTER VI

INSPIRED BUREAUCRACY

GERMANY is an inspired bureaucracy. Her real ruler is the bureaucrat. His impress is everywhere. We generally associate the bureaucrat with the pedant. Frenchmen run to lechery. Americans incline to graft. Pedantry is the German vice. It might have become the national poison, had not William II injected the potent antidote of his individualism into the body politic. The men at the helm of German affairs to-day have maintained the Prussian tradition of strict adherence to duty. But their horizon has widened. Sustained, not ossified by routine, they follow the star of the new.

I have met four Ministers of State, four Ambassadors, one sovereign Burgomaster, "Excellencies" by the score, and Privy Councilors innumerable. Everywhere I found alertness and life. There was, on the whole, little "red tape." If we elect a vital personality to office, and we feel that for once we have a man, not a marionette, we bubble over with enthusiasm and are loath to lose him even temporarily in the African jungle.

In Germany every bureau has its Roosevelt. Few but the Inner Circle know their names. They claim no public credit for their achievements. Unadvertised and unsung, they plod away at their desks. But their plans are accomplished, their dreams projected.

A man of this type, a mind fascinatingly radioactive, was the late Friedrich Althoff. The Ministry of Culture, to render the spirit, not the letter, of the original term, was the center of his ceaseless radiation. Strenuous, autocratic, he ruled with an iron rod. It is said that the Kaiser himself made concessions to him that he would not have made to a fellow-sovereign. There was no grandiose scheme of reform in which he was not a participant. No vital idea was left orphaned and begging on the steps of his office. In his bureau the most vital educational idea of the century, the international exchange of intellectual commodities, stepped full-fledged from a professional cerebrum. Althoff adopted the waif; he nourished it and sustained it. Who was its father we shall never know. I am personally acquainted with at least four claimants to that distinction. If I give the palm to any I shall mortally offend the rest.

Applying the Napoleonic code, let us not, therefore, inquire into the *paternité*. It was Althoff, at any rate, who built the bridge for the foundling across the Atlantic. Every professor

traversing the ocean is a living monument to this remarkable man.

Yet, so little known was this inspired bureaucrat outside of his circle that his death passed unnoticed by the American press. The first Kaiser Wilhelm Professor, John W. Burgess, had not heard of the occurrence until he received a letter from a mutual friend.

Althoff's spirit still hovers over the ministry, as Bismarck's over the Foreign Office. If Bismarck consolidated his country's political strength, it remains Althoff's distinction to have conquered the New World intellectually; at least, to have opened to the German mind the citadels of our universities, where formerly only brave pioneers like Hugo Münsterberg and Kuno Francke had gained isolated footholds. Conquests of peace, unlike conquests of war, are of mutual benefit to conqueror and vanquished, and the gates of German universities swing graciously open to invaders from the American side. Althoff's spirit abides in the American Institute founded after his death in the capital of the Kaiser. Surely bureaucracy has its victories, and education its Bismarcks.

Our Commissioner of Education, our nearest approach to the German *Kultusminister,* is practically powerless. His German colleague has a firm grip on matters of religion, education and art. In the body politic the Ministry of Culture may be compared with the soul. The amount of work

transacted in the humble building situated, if I rightly remember, at the intersection of the *Wilhelmstrasse* and *Unter den Linden,* is hardly credible. From morning until night the anterooms are crowded with foreign visitors and professorial aspirants. I have seen the Man Higher Up still at work at half-past nine in the evening. His bureau is an intellectual telephone-central where all the wires converge. If we had a new idea, we should never dream of inviting the cooperation of a government official. In Germany all new ideas are submitted to official sanction, and vital ideas are not often rejected.

The German professor receives his inspiration largely from the Minister of Culture. His position is curiously hybrid. He is part of the bureaucratic system, yet intellectually independent. Those who direct affairs at the Ministry are hidden from public sight. The professor, however, as the Man Higher Up explained to me, stands between them and the world. The modern German professor has nothing in common with the type made familiar to all through the *Fliegende Blätter.* He is a practical man, alive to the call of the age. There is nothing of the academic fossil about him. He is human, ambitious, and often a man of brilliant intellectual attainment. We labor under the impression that his remuneration is scant. We certainly underpay our professors. The income of the German professor I understand to be princely com-

pared with that of his American compeer. In addition to his salary, he receives a certain tithe from the students attending his lectures. Popular lecturers are known thus to have increased their stipends by from forty to fifty thousand marks in a single year. They are officers in that army of culture of which the *Kultusminister* is the commander-in-chief.

Not far from the *Kultusministerium* we find the Foreign Office. The cluster of buildings harboring this department may fitly be likened to the brain in the anatomy of the State. Here are conceived the political scores, which through the joint instrumentation of the Kaiser and his advisers have made Germany the bandmaster in the Concert of Nations. It is not often that a false note is sounded. German diplomacy frequently combines, with the genius of Richard Strauss, apparent dissonances into harmonies effective and startling. I have stated before that, in the opinion of the super-wise, the Emperor's interview in the London *Telegraph* was a brilliant stroke of diplomacy to be justified by future events. At the same time, there seems no doubt that bungling was not absent from the matter. The fact in the case is that the fateful manuscript was slipped by mistake into the wrong portfolio. Some one was careless, one cog was out of place, and the whole machinery came apparently to a standstill. Not because it was poorly organized, but because it was so splen-

didly organized. In such an exquisite machine, the slightest break is fatal.

The Foreign Office is almost rustic in its trappings. The sofas and carpets in the reception-room are positively shabby. No one who has ever seen the inside of the Foreign Office can maintain that Germany is not economical. A dentist's waiting-room is Oriental in luxury by comparison. Still there is a certain charm in imagining that perhaps it was the ashes from Bismarck's pipe that burned this hole in the carpet; that his Titanic back rubbed the bloom from that couch. No stenographer is employed in the political department. Never is the homely click of the typewriter heard! In Downing Street the secretaries dictate their letters into the ear of the phonograph; in the *Wilhelmstrasse* high officials themselves write their letters out in long-hand. Secrecy is bought at the cost of convenience. Quarters are crowded. Of comfort, of elegance, no trace. I feel that I could not work in such a place unless I were at least a privy councilor. If I were, surroundings wouldn't matter. I wouldn't lose my self-respect even in the humblest abode, supplied by a parsimonious government, because, after all, I would myself be part of that government.

I wonder if such considerations account for the German system of titles? There is to us something funny in calling everybody by his bureaucratic title, because we are ignorant of the eco-

nomic, ethical, æsthetic and social function of the thing. The *Geheimrat,* or Privy Councilor, and his varieties, people half the fashionable streets of Berlin. He is easily recognizable by his long frock coat, and the distinction with which he carries a portfolio under his arm. Some privy councilors are apparently purely imaginary creatures. For a distinction seems to be made between "real" and "unreal" privy councilors. The former, the "*wirkliche,*" has entered the bureaucratic heaven; the mere privy councilor, like a soul unborn, hovers in the titular limbo. "Real" privy councilors are addressed "Your Excellency," a title also bestowed upon high military officials, ambassadors and ministers. Rectors of universities and burgomasters of sovereign cities are called "Your Magnificence."

Even outside the sphere of bureaucracy, bureaucratic customs prevail. Social life is impregnated with its spirit. In addressing a person you label him. The nightwatchman is Mr. Night Watchman. His wife is referred to as Mrs. Night Watchman. A Colonel's wife is Mrs. Colonel. A doctor's wife Mrs. Doctor, although ladies who have earned the title object to its use by females not so distinguished. The title, it seems, establishes a communion between husband and wife, which even divorce cannot sever. I know of a lady who, when she parted from her husband, was Mrs. Lieutenant. When the rank of Colonel was ac-

corded to him, she rose to the occasion. And I have at this moment in my possession her visiting card with the legend: "Mrs. General, Excellency."

It's rather hard at first to kowtow symbolically every time you open your mouth, if you are a titleless stranger. Which reminds me of the young American who registered as Elector of New York, and was received everywhere like a prince. My father happens to be president of various societies; he was introduced consequently to a lot of excellencies as "Mr. President." He never got rid of the title. I am vice president of a publishing company, and I have firmly made up my mind to adopt that title the next time I travel abroad. The porter will make innumerable genuflections as I enter the hotel, and there will be an awesome catch in the chambermaid's voice as she brings me the coffee.

Besides, as I have said, the subject has a distinctly economic aspect. Germany pays her officials better than we do. But she cannot afford to pay them nearly enough, considering that her most brilliant men enter her service. In fact, money alone could not pay them. And being an economical lady, she compensates them with titles and decorations. It is cheaper to endow an official with a high title than to double his salary. The title, more than any amount of money, determines his social pre-eminence. If he be a poor man, no one expects lavish entertainments of him.

The millionaire gladly trots up four flights to the humble dwelling of the *Herr Geheimrat.* And a cup of tea prepared in His Excellency's kitchen goes to the head of the social climber like *Asti Spumanti.* When a German officer in moderate circumstances invites you to dinner, he doesn't attempt to show off. His rank insures his social standing; he need not buy your respect with truffles, or cannonade the castle of caste with a battery of champagne pops. These explanations were given me by a Minister of State whose honorable poverty exemplified the beauty of the system he expounded.

A man who wears the ribbon of the Legion of Honor will think twice before he participates in a street brawl. The bearer of a distinguished title will try to live up to that title. His social privileges entail social duties. German officers are not allowed to go out in civilian garb. The uniform alone affords moral protection. Places of evil association are barred to them. Their identity can be ascertained at a glance. Like the alderman in a small town, they've got to be good. And there is always a stimulus in the hope of promotion: special merit receives special and visible recognition. The philanthropist's energy will be redoubled, if he knows that the eyes of his sovereign are resting upon him, and that he need not wait for the next world before a reward comes to him in the shape of some titular honor. We re-

ward our millionaire philanthropists by cracking jokes at their expense. The comic press is their Hall of Fame. I am sure the fear of ridicule has tightened the purse-strings of many a bashful Carnegie. That is one of the reasons why I, at any rate, have never founded a museum.

The public is a doubting Thomas, and reputation in art and science is an indeterminable factor. A title, a decoration, assays a man's worth. American society is afraid to receive the artist, and ignores the scholar. Germany lends the title of "professor" to distinguished artists, and, of course, to distinguished scientists. That is their passport. Great artists may dispense with it. Men of Menzel's stamp need no passport beyond that of genius. Still their path is made smoother thereby. They are in less danger of being snubbed by inferiors. And, of course, in Germany, a title is a thing of very substantial value. A man who assumes a title he has not earned is a thief, and is punished accordingly. Professors of pedicure and clairvoyance are unknown in Berlin. Titles, while ungrudgingly given to those who have a right to them, are sternly denied to fakirs.

We may regard inherited titles as absurd, but titles earned by service are certainly sensible, one may even say, democratic. It's the one chance of the burgher to get even with the nobility. While the system establishes a differential social tariff, it creates no obstacle that cannot be overcome by

merit. And as the soldier's uniform lends patches of color to the street, the titles devised by bureaucracy brighten the salon. It's much more interesting to talk to a circle of privy councilors than to be surrounded by a lot of Mr. Smiths and Mrs. Somebodys. I don't blame our heiresses for wanting to marry men of position and title. A simple baron sheds some luster on social functions, and it is incredible what sparkle the presence of an Excellency lends to a lady's "At Home."

CHAPTER VII

THE MORALS OF EUROPE

LADIES and gentlemen, who have followed me so far, are you not astounded at my conservatism? I am. I described myself once as a conservative Anarchist. I am afraid there is little of the Anarchist in my composition to-day. Europe has transformed and converted me. I have set my face toward order. I fear that a suspicion of respectability always lurked in my heart. Of course, people will never believe me. They imagine that I live the life of an æsthetic tramp, break up homes, and am continually in debt, merely because my name is attached to certain passional studies. A bank account, it seems, is irreconcilable with a poet of passion.

Dear souls, I am really a Philistine. I am scrupulously honest, and as for wild oats, I have never sown them. Poets, like the comets, those celestial Bohemians, are privileged to deviate from their orbits. My actions may at times contradict my words. Do not, therefore, question my sincerity. I certainly must refuse to live up to all the things I am preaching. At the present, however, I be-

lieve in them. I have forsaken my radical affiliations. I have returned to the fold. But, alas, no fatted calf is in sight. I made more money when I was supposed to be wicked.

Having thus disposed of *my* morals, let us now examine the morals of Europe. I see a look of quickened interest in your eyes. You will be terribly disappointed. In America we are accustomed to associate morality pre-eminently with sex. Don Juan is to us the devil incarnate. We regard a sexually continent man as a moral man. We have no objection to his "correcting luck" in financial affairs. Measured by American standards Atys *must* have been a paragon of Virtue. And the Sultan, too, is surrounded by virtuous men.

Sex has really nothing to do with morals. It belongs to the sphere of passion; being natural, it is unmoral. Loving, like dining, is not an ethical function. The eunuch may be moral or immoral. The Mormon likewise. There is no justification for confusing ethical problems with physiological problems. Love is never immoral, because it necessarily implies mutual consent. Only where that is absent, an erotic question becomes an ethical question. Within the Golden Rule no amorous experience can possibly be immoral. Thus, except in loveless marriages or in rape, ethical problems rarely arise in the realm of passion. I shall not, therefore, discuss Europe's sexual morality under this heading.

We, in America, regard Europe as immoral because of a curious notion that sex, in itself, is immoral. With the elimination of the sexual factor, the morals of Europe are superior to ours. The European's integrity in business, his sense of social duty, and his firm adherence to an intangible code of professional honor, thrown against our American background, endow him with the halo of saintship. I wonder if the insistence on ethical and religious training abroad in public schools is not, like militarism, a blessing in disguise.

We abhor the idea of injecting religious instruction into our educational system, although, absurdly enough, we approve of indiscriminate Bible-readings in schools, irrespective of the children's religious persuasions, and expect even the atheist to swear in court on the Book.

You are a church-goer presumably. But I am sure your religious notions are hazy. Perhaps you go to church as to a social function. If you had been brought up in Germany you would know exactly what you believed and what you did not believe. For one thing, you would have had systematic religious training in school. And you would have learned to apply your religion daily, as you apply the multiplication table. Both Gentile and Jew are instructed by special teachers of their own faith in the elements of their creed, as they are instructed in geography and spelling. When they grow up they will have to pay taxes

in support of the State Church or the Synagogue, unless they formally declare their dissent from the faith. They will not take this step without serious reflection. They are thus forced to think clearly for themselves. That may ultimately blast the Rock of Ages with intellectual dynamite, but at least they will know for what it stands.

American children are often curiously ignorant of even the most beautiful of Biblical stories, things they should know as matters of general culture. Already the Sunday School despairs of itself. It reaches only a comparatively small percentage of children. It cannot hammer religion into them as a part of their general education. It is an outside thing in school. And an outside thing it remains in life. We take our religion on Sundays as one takes medicine. If conscience calls during business hours, we aren't in. Sporadically, however, we experience religion with hysterical intensity. The corruptionist suddenly discovers that he is wicked, and, like the newly-converted savage, he suffers from violent ethical cramps. With this difference: the savage, in sudden religious fervor, may inflict *harikari* upon himself; the reformed American millionaire vents his religion on others. He plays Jack the Ripper to Personal Liberty. He makes large donations to the Anti-Saloon League. He deprives the little ones of their Sunday.

We in America are Supermen in our glorious

disregard of others, but without the excuse of the Superman. We are like children badly brought up. Our lack of sensitiveness is amazingly revealed in the comic supplement of our newspapers, the weekly glorification of horse-play. The comic press is an unfailing determinant of a country's morals. I am prepared to admit that the coarse reflection of the life erotic in French and German comic journals points to a similar lack of sensitiveness on the Continent in matters relating to sex.

We are perhaps most barbarous, most unethical, in our attitude toward age. We lack that tact of the heart for which white hair in itself is an object of veneration. The wonder is that we don't eat up our parents when their physical powers decline. I am sure that certain exponents of strenuousness would have something to say in defense of this practice. We would have heard such a measure urged from the White House if our chief executives were not themselves already beyond the Oslerian age-limit.

The fathers of the Republic have, indeed, shown their wisdom when they placed the highest gift beyond the grasp of a boy. The cult of Oslerism could flourish only in the youngest land of the world. We value youth above brains. I may state so frankly, having both. We yield our seats in a street railway gladly to young girlhood; with reluctance to an elderly woman; never would we

dream of sacrificing our convenience to an elderly man. In Europe I have seen young ladies charmingly offer their seats to their elders of either sex.

Recently Mr. Roosevelt, before his departure for Africa—(How quaint this sentence will ring in a hundred years when we have all passed into history!)—desperately clung to a strap in a Broadway car. Perhaps, if he had still brandished the Big Stick we would have shown some courtesy to the man. But we have no reverence for past attainment. We have no use for the "has-been." No title softens the pillow of an "ex-." Abroad, a distinguished man is honored not only for what he is, but for what he has been in the past. Our regard is confined to the man in office; for the retired fighter we have merely a mild contempt.

We forgive the man of action every sin except the one forgivable sin. We countenance a Senator's political corruption, but rise in anger over his indiscreet note to some questionable female. We boil over with indignation, where Paris or Berlin would shrug their shoulders and smile. Uncharitable, I say, and un-Christian. Christ drove the money-changers from the temple, but he forgave the Magdalen.

We are rather proud at heart of our financial robber barons. We expect art to be moral. We never question the morals of Wall street. We apply the penal code to the artist, but we have only

regard for the virtuoso in manipulating the ticker. We set up monuments to grafters. Personally, I have no objection to graft. On the contrary. But I am afraid that it is a vice typically American. There are grafters abroad, naturally. But one does not speak of them with sneaking admiration. They aren't "the thing," socially. They are not regarded as models for the young. In Europe the day of the robber baron is over; in America it has only begun.

We do not interfere with the big thieves, except by calling them names. But we interfere actively with the personal freedom of our humbler citizens. We forbid them to play or to drink beer on Sunday. I never play athletic games, and I hardly ever drink beer. But I sometimes burn with desire to soak myself with rum as a protest against the fanatics. I believe, to paraphrase Wilde, that it is not immoral for a prickly thistle to be a prickly thistle, but that it would be frightfully selfish if she wanted all the flowers of the field to be both prickly and thistles. I have nothing to say against the teetotaler. I respect his individuality. But let him respect mine. We continually sin against individuality. Ours is a country of ready-made morals and ready-made clothes. Abroad no one meddles with personal liberty, and nobody wears ready-made clothes.

Conformity is our catchword. We suppress

subjective forces in politics and in art. We eliminate the personal note in the press. The day of the Greeleys was brief. Journalists abroad have certain convictions which they are not prepared to sacrifice at any price. We have no such convictions. One evening I had dinner in Berlin with a celebrated professor of political history. His name is on everybody's tongue. He is a man who hobnobs with Emperors, and his weekly reviews of the political situation are regarded as final. All the newspapers of the world come to his library, and he reads them all in the original languages.

The conversation naturally drifted to journalism, and I interpreted for him the status of the American editor. The policy of the paper, I explained, is prescribed by the proprietor and reversed at his pleasure; the editor's personal opinion is of no consequence, even if his salary may be that of a king. He is a living automaton, paid for his dexterity, not his views. He might write Democratic editorials in the morning, and Republican editorials at night. In private life he might be a Socialist or a Mugwump. Yet no one would think the less of him, or brand him as an unprincipled rogue. I did not pretend to be better than others. I even admitted that to be such an intellectual Jekyll and Hyde might be a delightful sensation. As long as my articles were unsigned, I would not regard myself as responsible for their

tenor. I should look upon my job as an exercise in political dialectics.

The professor was very much shocked by this lack of principle. His wife, a delightful woman, looked upon me as one looks upon a leper. A German journalist of standing would refuse to write a line, signed or unsigned, of which he disapproved in his heart. Those who sacrifice their convictions are regarded as pariahs by the profession at large. Journalists abroad take themselves more seriously than we. They have finer ethical standards. The professor, being not only a learned, but also a wise man, realized that the views I expounded were the logical growth of our peculiar culture—or the lack thereof; but I am afraid he looks upon them as cancerous. Which, perhaps, they are.

We play the game to win. We have little of the sportsman's joy in the game as such. Not for us the subtler victory of courageous defeat. As money is the stake, we despise the poor—not because they are poor, but because they have not "made good." We make compromises, permissible in journalism, but fatal in art. Literary geniuses of the old world are prepared, for the sake of their vision, to live on a crust. Schiller was a man of small means. Indeed, I probably got more for my English version of his *Maid of Orleans* from Maude Adams than he ever did for the original. Chatterton "perished in his pride." I, Le Galli-

enne says, perish in my conceit. Honorable poverty had no terror for the great English poets. We barter dreamland kingdoms for real estate.

Our greatest living author is actually a corporation. We may speak of "The Mark Twain" as we speak of "The Standard Oil." That opens amusing vistas of "The John Milton, Limtd.," and "The William Shakespeare, Inc." For all we know, this may be the solution of the Shakespeare problem. William Shakespeare may have been merely the trade-mark for a stock company, of which Francis Bacon was the chief stockholder, and the gentleman usually referred to as the author of the plays merely a dummy director! If John Keats had been an American he might have been incorporated under the laws of New Jersey. His name, instead of being "writ in water," would be writ on watered stock! The genius of Poe, alas, was antipodal to the American spirit. If he had capitalized his brains at five hundred thousand dollars, he would surely be in the Hall of Fame. Let me state right here that I refuse ever to have my name there engraven. I prefer to roam through the spirit world unindorsed by smug nobodies, a vagabond ghost with Whitman and Poe.

I turn an honest penny wherever I can. While my attitude toward the Golden Calf is not one of worship, I approach it with considerable respect. Every dollar is so much potential energy impris-

oned. But I refuse to water my literary stock for any amount of money. That is the only way an artist can be immoral. We have yet to learn the raptures of the scholar whose eyes grow dim with tears when, after digging in dusty tomes for five-and-twenty years, he discovers the root of some irregular verb. Not ours the thrill of the poet who, after sleepless nights, dances with glee because he has at last wrested from his brain the ultimate expression for some sensuous and elusive emotion. We rank the man who gets away with another man's invention above the author himself. Logically, we should worship the devil because he gets away with such a large part of God's creation.

CHAPTER VIII

ADAM AND EVE

We exaggerate racial distinctions. Save for skin and clothes we are not, any of us, far removed from the ape. Primal instincts in men and women are the same throughout the world, and the lure of the flesh is the same. The American college boy and the young Eskimo in his sealskin are stirred by the same primitive impulse. The fundamental facts of sex are identical in Kalamazoo and in Pekin. But our attitudes toward sex undergo various transformations, with changes of climate. We all have the same appetites, but our modes of gratification vary with our refinement. The table manners at Sherry's are not those of Childs'. The desire of Lucullus for whipped oysters, and the ravin of the Parisians, who stood in line for bread during the great revolution, were fundamentally one and the same hunger; but the mastication of the Roman was art, while the French mob chewed, munched and bolted hideously. Similarly, it may be safely affirmed, that the ways of the love-famished lad are not those of the *gourmet.*

Europeans are *gourmets* in love. They relish it as they relish their oysters. We are a trifle ashamed of it. But, being human, we cannot starve ourselves. We steal to love's banquet stealthily, with an uncomfortable feeling of doing wrong. We sin, but we sin *against* our principles. The continental youth sins *on* principle. We make the flesh indecent, a thing we despise, but from which, being human, we cannot divorce ourselves. The refined European spiritualizes the flesh; he makes it beautiful; he turns its frailty into strength. Consequently, his love-life is healthier than our own. Even when hectic desire entices him into devious gardens of passion, vulgarity will not bespatter his roses. We cannot be wicked without being coarse. The consciousness of sin dwells in our hearts like a worm. Spiritually there is nothing of the Greek in us.

We may, however, speak of a renascence of the Greek spirit abroad. Euphorion has not yet sprung into life. He is about to be born. Germany is in travail. She is laboring, painfully, slowly. Her, at times, morbid caprices in the immediate past were those of a woman *enceinte*. The trip of the Greek dance is heard again in Berlin. The subtleties of Greek sophists are echoed in German letters. Poets hark back to the Hellenic themes—Hofmannsthal's Œdipus confronts the Sphinx. Electra wails in the music of Strauss. Nudity, the weapon of Phryne, is raised to an art

by Olga Desmond. The voice of Dionysos is heard in Nietzsche. Germany's joy in the body is not yet purely Hellenic. Poisonous vapors cloud the sun. But sunrise is nigh. Already we hear the little laugh of Aspasia. Germany has beheld the glorified *hetæra* re-encased in the flesh. Beautiful and cerebral, and free, she is the inspiration of sages and poets. Not hers the penalty of mortality. She is the mother of spirit-children; and Charmides is her kinsman. He is more purely spiritual. Docile and enthusiastic, pupil and friend, his lovely presence comforts and stays in those high altitudes of the mind where the garlands of passion shrivel to dust.

We are not yet prepared for Hellenic ideals. Charmides amongst us would be a dandified "high-brow," and Aspasia, "off-color." We would mar and crush and pervert her. And we would certainly "cut" her. We understand physiological passion, and we understand spiritual passion, but we are intensely suspicious where one partakes of the elements of the other. It is curious that the greatest singer of spiritualized passion should have been an American. *Leaves of Grass,* not *Mademoiselle de Maupin,* is "the Golden Book of Spirit and Sense." Perhaps Whitman was given to us because we most needed him.

We need him more than ever for the emancipation of man and the emancipation of passion. Every country, they say, has the government it

deserves. We are governed by Woman. We cringe before her as slaves before the master. And, like slaves, we talk evil of her behind her back. And we adore her in false and hysterical fashion. The reason usually ascribed by foreigners for the truly anomalous position of woman in the United States is the scarcity of females among our early settlers. They haven't been scarce, however, for a good many years. There have been plenty of them as long as *I* can remember. I would blame the Pilgrim Fathers. The essential indecency of the Puritan mind is clearly exposed in the attitude of the American Adam toward the American Eve.

We deify woman because we bestialize passion. We place her on a pedestal, we forget she has a body, so as not to despise her. We worship her as a goddess, because we fear to degrade her as a mate. We protect her by preposterous laws, because we distrust ourselves and her. We have not yet learned to love the body purely. We fail to discriminate between passion and vice. So distorted is our vision, that sex in itself seems debasing. But the instinct of sex is ineradicable. The goddess topples from the altar, if she does not descend voluntarily.

Man is divine because he is human. We are ashamed of that divinity. Out of that shame is born the sham of our Puritan morals and a morbidity of which we are hardly aware. We yield

to temptation surreptitiously, like bad monks. We dare not make sin beautiful. We make it ugly and coarse. And every time we react against our own vulgar trespasses, we prostrate ourselves before the Good Woman who doesn't exist, and doesn't want to exist. We glory in groveling in the dust at her feet. We give expression to the unhealthy sentiment that no man is good enough for a woman. When a prostitute slays one of her lovers, she is beatified in the press. We refuse to admit that a woman can be really bad.

I always thought it ungallant, if truthful, of Adam, to blame it all on the woman. But why go to the opposite extreme, and blame everything on the male? There is a strongly masochistic element in the American attitude toward woman. The man who wheels a baby carriage for his sick wife deserves laudation—he is a hero; but the man who assumes the domestic functions of the female unnecessarily is a specimen from Krafft-Ebing.

Elinor Glyn says that American men are like brothers or elderly aunts. Elinor has her flashes. The maleness of the average American is certainly not so insistently felt as that of his cousin abroad. Externally, at least, there is frequently a certain feminine strain in the American man. He is handsomer, more graceful, less strongly sexed. Abroad, where men dictate theatrical fashion, the

Chorus Girl monopolizes the musical comedy stage. In an Amazon kingdom there would be only Chorus Boys. We have not reached that phase as yet, but undoubtedly the Chorus Boy is already in the ascendant.

Our women are more self-possessed, more athletic, and, if it must be said, more mannish than the Laura of Petrarch and the Gretchen of Faust. Such modifications must already affect in some subtle manner the relations between the sexes. They give rise to cycles of problems novel in the present stage of civilization. Perhaps the balance of power is shifting. We have placed woman in the saddle: beware lest she take the reins! Some day we may be officially what we are already in essence, a matriarchy, swayed by the "mother right" of primitive races. Unless a radical readjustment takes place, the world may see the spectacle of an American Amazon Queen ruling a henpecked nation.

One hope, however, remains to the Mere Male: the Eternal Woman. Yes, woman herself. For we are mistaken if we imagine that she looks up to the man who humiliates himself before her. She is much too near the earth, too human, to find pleasure in the exalted position we force upon her. Nietzsche put the case rather strongly; too strongly, I think. It is not the whip she craves, but the master. When an American woman has the opportunity of meeting a foreigner, she

usually marries him. His masterful masculinity, not his title, compels her attention. International marriages are often unfortunate, because the American woman, nursed in selfishness, lacks the worldly wisdom and graceful resignation of her less imperious sister. Nevertheless she is glad to slip from her pedestal unnoticed, when she travels abroad. Accustomed to epicene adoration, she not infrequently falls an easy victim to aggressive maleness abroad.

The American Girl in Europe reminds one of a young queen traveling incognito. But that is perilous, little girl, if you don't know the rules of the game! The young German girl is wiser than you in some things. She is less self-possessed, but more self-reliant. She doesn't expect a man to carry all her bundles. And she is not afraid to go home unaccompanied, if need be. And when she goes out with a man, she will not permit him to pay for her as a rule. It isn't reasonable that the male should support the female before they are married. The young American is expected to pay for the mere privilege of dining with a woman. Dear ladies, who read this, do not think that I would not gladly invite you to dinner. I object to the principle, not to the custom. The young German woman generally accepts no such favors as a matter of course. She knows that "give and take" is the basis of every bargain. An unfair bargain demoralizes the gainer. She

also knows that the law of the man is not the law of the maid. What's sauce for the gander isn't always sauce for the goose.

Eve abroad knows that Adam is polygamistic; and that, if we wish to preserve the institution of matrimony we must provide safety valves for the man. One half of the world, we know, believes in polygamy. The other half practises it. The Koran sanctions, economy vetoes, a plurality of wives. Occidental nations are monogamic in theory, not in fact.

The continental woman, as a rule, overlooks the extra-marital exploits of the husband. The necessity for this precaution is recognized officially only in the *Code Napoléon*. But if you talk to the wives confidentially, they will make startling admissions. I know a charming couple, somewhat advanced in years, whose married life is an idyl. With tender solicitude they read each other's wishes from their eyes. I was astonished, because I had been told that for many years the husband had spent half his income on a mistress. And the wife knew it, always. We had a heart-to-heart talk.

"Where is she now?" I inquired.

"She is dead," the old lady answered. There was a trace of relief in her voice.

"And she has had no successor?"

"None. You see, he is getting older, and even before her death he had come back to me. He

loved me all the time; the other woman merely appealed to his senses. I am very happy now. I only regret the money he squandered on that—that woman."

"Hush," I said, "she is dead. It is only just that men should be more lavish with their mistresses than with their wives. The Scarlet Woman is disinherited. Legally, socially, she is defenseless. The wife is privileged, fortified by the world. Surely the guerdon of sin is scant in comparison."

"Probably you are right," she replied. "I begin to see life more steadily every year. We never speak of her, save as one speaks of a friend. He tries hard to make me forget, as well as forgive. I let him exert himself. I accept his little favors," she added, wistfully. "I tried hard enough to make him forget in the past, and—failed. I did not let him kiss me for many years."

"And now?"

At this moment the husband came home from a late constitutional, bringing her flowers like some ancient Philemon to his Baucis, and tenderly kissed her behind the ear. If she had been an American woman, she would have dragged him to the divorce court years and years ago. And the late afternoon of their lives would have been sunless and loveless.

We often make a mess of marriage because we marry too young. We are in indecorous haste to perpetuate the species. Marriage invariably rubs

the first bloom from the rose of romance. But sometimes, between sincere men and women, the flower of perfect understanding blooms more lovely in the place of the first impetuous passion. But the soil must be prepared for its growth. The inexperienced boy-husband and his girl-wife are too impatient. They will not wait for the soft tendrils to sprout. Leaf by leaf they pick the rose to pieces, and then, in petulant anger, desert the garden.

Europe provides, for the husband, at least, an amorous education antedating his marriage. He needs lessons in sentiment, not in sensation. Kisses, bought and loveless, are insufficient. The young German generally has what is called "a minor affair," *Ein kleines Verhältniss*. One might call it a miniature marriage. The girl, usually some shopgirl, sincerely loves him. She does not expect him to marry her. And some day, she knows, she will lose him. He brings culture beyond her station into her life. She teaches him the lesson of loving kindness. But for her, he would learn from the gutter the lesson of vice. She is the steward of his affection. She keeps it pure for the woman who will take her place. When he marries there will be tears, and not a little heartache. And then she, too, will marry, and will bring a trace of the refinement of her lover into the humbler home of the husband. The miniature marriage is at an end. None the

worse for their experience, the youth and his inamorata will each enter the major life.

Do not misunderstand me. The standard of *bourgeois* morality is the same the world over. But we are all of us sinners. Only abroad, men trespass artistically. We are bunglers in sin. In Europe, however, the moral code is not indiscriminately applied. Genius is not compelled to wear the cloak of ready-made morals. There is a certain poet abroad; he is very famous. I will not mention his name. Everybody knew that he was equally in love with his wife and with an actress of great reputation. Society respected his peculiar temperament, and invariably asked either the wife or the mistress when he was invited. The mistress lived with him in town; the wife shared his country seat. It happened some years ago that both women about the same time whispered the tenderest secret into his ear. That, I believe, is the way they put it in novels. When at last the fatal day had dawned, the poet is said to have traveled hither and thither between his two abodes, to comfort both women in their hour of need. Berlin laughed, and forgave.

Margarete Beutler, a woman of distinguished poetical gifts, frankly announced in an autobiographical sketch that she was temperamentally unfitted for permanent wedlock; and Gabriele Reuter, a Hypatia of letters, boldly advertised the birth of her extra-marital child. Both women

command the respect of even respectability abroad. Europe has accepted still stranger erotic vagaries from genius. Not because she approves of sexual irregularity, but because she attaches no exaggerated importance to purely personal physiological functions. Brain counts for more than conventional morals. Aphrodite's reputation in Greece was deplorable, but she nevertheless remained a goddess. Mercury was a thief, but divine honors were not therefore withheld. Those in whom the divine spark glows and burns, must be forgiven many frailties that would be unpardonable in mortals not so inspired. Their genius, in turn, casts the glamor of romance over the squalid facts of existence.

CHAPTER IX

SOME WOMEN

I HAVE never loitered with prurient interest in the love-marts of the world. I have been intoxicated with the glitter and glare of Broadway, but even as a boy I never glanced twice, except in pity, at the venders of passion. Therefore have I little to tell of the *Friedrichstrasse* at night. I distinguish, of course, between the *demi-mondaine* and the scarlet-robed daughter of Lilith who has come to us through the ages. The wisdom of the centuries, ironic, yet wistful, distorts the curve of her smile. Her eyebrows quiver like serpents. Her tunic is more precious than purple, for it is dyed with the heart-blood of emperors; and her tiara is jeweled with the songs of the world. Semiramis, Sappho and Catherine the Great, her lurid incarnations, flame up against the horizon. Scarlet and splendid, she holds in her hand the jewel of deathless yearning. She is begotten of Heaven and Hell.

There are born three types of the female—the Eternal Harlot, the Eternal Woman, and the Woman in Scarlet.

The Eternal Harlot bears the fragile vial of transitory delight. She is all of the earth, earthy.

Less robust, still of the earth, but spiritualized and transfigured, mistress and mother, the Eternal Woman brings loving kindness and peace into the world. Unlike the Woman in Scarlet, she has no aspirations beyond the Race. Unlike the *demi-mondaine's,* her eyes are set toward the future. Through her, evolution works its indomitable will.

The harlot is woman debased; she is woman without cosmic purpose. The Woman in Scarlet is woman endowed with an alien purpose, striving to transcend the limits of sex. But sin and song and dominion cannot appease in her heart the cry for the child and the legitimate functions of wifehood; barren and sad and dissatisfied, she passes into the night.

I have always viewed *Venus peripatetica* with compassion and horror. And yet, are not we who sell our souls more despicable than those who sell only their bodies? The woman of the street preserves her authentic emotions for her lover. She keeps her heart unscathed of the amorous traffic. The writer, however, cannot give less than his soul. He transmits something of his real self invariably into his work, even if lovelessly undertaken. Try as you may, you can't help being sincere, sometimes.

The Æsthetic School, conscious of the infamy

of this indecent exposure, diadems Pose with the Castilian wreath. But that is, in itself, a pose. We can, after all, draw only upon the resources within us; and for literary purposes there is no ink like heart blood. *Le style c'est l'homme;* and all books *are* confessions.

But that is why the *Friedrichstrasse* at night sickens my heart. In the daytime the *Friedrichstrasse* is a highway of commerce. When night draws down her curtains spangled with constellations, the face of the street changes swiftly as by the stroke of Merlin's magic wand. The mask of humanity falls; the werewolf appears, savage and growling. We are borne along the walking love-mart of Berlin.

I could tell strange things of the *Friedrichstrasse,* of uncouth passions and fantastic desires. This is indeed a carnival of vice. Here unclean phantoms keep their tryst. Curious caprices; uncanny suggestions; leprous faces and leering lips. Sin in strange mummery grins at us. Lechery in divers shapes makes indecent grimaces. Everywhere the phosphorescent glow of an ancient civilization. On Broadway I have seen only its pallid reflection.

If you carelessly glanced at this girl you would not imagine that she is really Salmacis mincing his steps as of old. Gray, pale wraiths of Greek things walk in the shadow of Berlin.

Hush! I will be silent, and chain those dis-

quieting visions in the remotest cerebral cavern. I shall shut my eyes to that unholy procession, sustaining the torch of unchastity and lighting the temples of lust.

In the *Moulin Rouge* and in *Arcadia,* both not far from the *Friedrichstrasse,* vice stalks in a dress suit. There are cafés in the *Friedrichstrasse* where its companion is murder. Where lust is king, aristocracy joins hands with the slums. But my kingdom is not of *this* world. Love and the women I sing dwell in another region.

Ermengarde, for instance, lived in Charlottenburg. Charlottenburg is to Berlin what Harlem is to New York. Ermengarde is to me what Frau von Stein was to Goethe. We have no such figures as Frau von Stein in America. No text-book tells of Longfellow's and Whittier's extra-marital loves. Poe's love affairs were hopelessly Platonic, and Whitman's children a bluff! We shall never have a full-blooded art until we develop the *liaison.*

As sounds from a music-box, women's faces float in swift succession from the secret chambers of my brain. I beg your pardon if I have falsified literary history to round out a figure of speech. My relations with Ermengarde were far more innocuous than Goethe's with Frau von Stein. We never were sweethearts; but love, like a spark, was always ready to leap into flame. Those were delightful days, and delicious—afternoon teas!

Dear Ermengarde, you were terribly knowing. One could talk to you of all things. You knew everybody; you had a man's understanding. Yet, how womanly you were! You were fond of me, more than you dared confess even to yourself. But you didn't take me quite seriously, and you knew I was fickle. When we went to the theater together, and you were gowned in your most splendid attire—I remember that dress overlaid with silver!—I seemed to myself like a page of mediæval days watching a band of players at the side of his queen. And sometimes when her interest in the play flagged, she softly squeezed his hand. But the heart of the little page fluttered always, so that he heard no word of what was said on the stage.

And there was Madeleine, supple, strong and superb. I think, Ermengarde, you were a little jealous of her. I loved to sit with Madeleine and her husband. We had our coffee in the garden room, the three of us. We discussed art, and love, and her prospective admirers. Madeleine was at heart a Madonna—a Madonna wedded to Don Juan. A Madonna, moreover, who had absorbed, intellectually, the philosophy of Don Juan. When a man stares at a woman, she said, he unconsciously pays her a compliment. Like the knee of the faithful reverently bended before the monstrance, his attitude is a form of worship. And every kiss, even if forced from reluctant lips, is a

prayer at the shrine of Astarte, a virile affirmation of the supremacy of the sex. Such frankness would have been unbecoming in a descendant of the Pilgrim Fathers. It was refreshing in this glorious daughter of Eve. There was always between us, too, the potentiality of affection. The European atmosphere is surcharged with sex attraction. In America the ticker is the substitute for the heart.

As I write this, certain brain vibrations shape themselves into the enigmatic smile of Francesca. If Mona Lisa had come to life, she would have made your body her mansion! You are somber like her, and mysterious; but, unlike her, you articulate the meaning of your existence. We might have been very dear to each other, had things been different. You know there are women with whom, for some curious reason, I feel as intimate as though we had been sweethearts in an earlier incarnation. You are one of these women. There is nothing petty in you. With a miraculous patience you listen to the confessions of others. You are a mother-confessor who knows no frown; only blessings and balm flow from your strangely curved lips.

I never quite understood your interest in Aholibah. Aholibah, to be sure, was intellectual, even brilliant, but her eyes were weary from too much loving. She was always seeking God, but her temples tumbled, being built in the flesh. I told

her that I was sadly in need of some *grande passion.* "Give me," I declaimed, "an unrequited love!" She promised; but nothing came of it. I saw too little of her, perhaps. Our ways thereafter were like two geometrical lines that intersect at infinity only.

Life in Berlin was so strangely colored for me, spiced with bewildering passions. The New World seems stale after the potions, some venom, some wine, quaffed from the cup of the Old. I wonder if *you* will ever read this, Marion, strangest and shyest of all my loves. I shall never forget that evening we met at the house of ——, but I must be careful; he, I am certain, will see what I write. And how I read some passionate verses, and how my voice trembled with real emotion, and how involuntarily you lowered your eyes. And no one knew that every word of my mouth was aimed at your heart like an arrow. I wasn't sure you knew, except when we said good-bye. Then I said—I forget what I said. You will remember, being a woman! How sweetly you smiled when again we met. And then that curious letter, pregnant with strange remorse! I wonder why. Perhaps it is well we parted forever. Exquisite emotions are not easily duplicated; the heart is more sensitive than the photographer's plate.

And then your namesake swam into my ken, and again love wrote its purple meaning across the sky. This Marion, too, loved me dearly. She

bravely tried to conceal the truth from me. But when I suspected her kinship, however remote, with the throngs that people the *Friedrichstrasse,* the wine of passion turned to gall. I was cruel to her, uncharitable; and I know that some day I shall be punished for this.

Valeria was her successor—strange, morbid, mad, hysterical. Her lover was a demon—morphine. There was no emotion, bizarre and unrestful, with which her soul would not vibrate. Above all, she loved pain. Her love for me was idolatrous. I cannot describe my emotion for her. Passion was curiously mixed with amazement.

I was often stunned and surprised abroad. I met so many people out of my own books! I had never known that they really existed. I had never met them at Martin's. They had hidden their faces from me in America. Yet, here they were. I recognized the type. They made me feel creepy. I understood why my critics had objected to them. I wouldn't like to pass my life amongst them. I am not sure whether I ought not to have "cut" them. In the purple nights of Berlin I saw for the first time that I had always been a realist. I was sorry for the figments of my brain when I beheld them splendidly clothed in the flesh.

I was most sorry for you, little girl,—I don't remember your name,—although I have written a poem to you:

O little siren of the rose-white skin,
Reared to strange music and to stranger sin,
With scornful lips that move to no man's plea,
O little Maid of Sappho, come to me!

Beneath long lashes, downcast eyes and coy,
Yet uninitiate to no secret joy!
O bud burst open ere her day begun,
The virgin and the strumpet blent in one!
Come close to me! Lay your small hand in mine,
And drink the music of my words like wine.
And let me touch your little breasts that swell
With joy remembered where her kisses fell.
Ah! she whose wise caressive fingers strike
Your heart-strings and the cithara alike!
By what love-potion is your passion fanned,
What is the magic of that wary hand?
What is the secret of her strange caress,
Fierce tortured kisses, or the tenderness
That woman gives to woman—flame or snow?
I, too, can kiss or bruise you; you shall know
That love like mine is delicate as hers,
Or madder still, to madder passion stirs,
That shall consume you like some fiery sea.
O little Maid of Sappho, come to me!

Or is it song that sets your blood on fire?
Behold in me no novice to the lyre.
Who is this woman Sappho? I can sing
Like her of Eros. Yea, each voiceless thing,

The very rocks of Mytilene's strand
Shall be made vocal at your sweet command.
Hers but the cooing of the Lesbian lutes,
Mine every passion in the heart that roots.
Albeit your sweetness lives in Sappho's song,
Her love is barren . . . and the years are long.
And how she sang and how she loved and erred,
Only by moonsick women will be heard.
The lyric thunder that my hand has hurled
Shall ring with resonant music through the world,
Quickening the blood in every lover's breast.
And then your beauty on my glory's crest
Shall ride, a goddess, to eternity—
O little Maid of Sappho, come to me!

Unscathed in Love's dominion I have been,
And still a sceptic kissed the mouth of Sin.
Love seemed the dreariest of all things on earth,
Until my passion filled your heart with mirth!
Like frightened bird my cynic wisdom flies
Before the cruel candor of your eyes.
As for sweet rain a valley sick with drouth,
Thus thirsts my love for your indifferent mouth;
And still your thoughts are wandering to the dell
Where Sappho walks and where her minions dwell.
Be then, of maidens most corrupt, most chaste,
The one delight that I shall never taste!
And through the dreary æons yet unborn,
The love of you shall rankle like a thorn.

Leave one last thrill for my sad heart to crave
In the ennui of heaven and the grave.
Incite my passion; my embraces flee—
And never, never, never come to me!

O listen, listen to my heart-beat's call!
Aught else I say, it is not true at all.
She has her maidens whom her soft ways woo,
And they to her are no less dear than you.
For your dear sake I gladly fling aside
Laurels and loves! A beggar stripped of pride,
I only know I need you more than she—
O little Maid of Sappho, come to me!

Your arms were lilies, you were frail, childlike; but your eyes peered with demoniacal passion into ancient abysses glittering with putrefaction. Dear Little Maid of Sappho, how I might have loved you! And ah! that feverish night half drowned in champagne, with the sinister suggestions of an alien Aphrodite. I was not strong to save you. Besides, I had no time. That sounds very heartless. I am afraid I am too egocentric to be easily diverted into the labyrinth of another's soul. Yet the thought of you, little girl, fills me with a vague unrest. You might have been my fate: you were hardly an episode. Perhaps we shall meet again. But you will then be beyond salvation.

We often speak with envy of the romance of forgotten days. Yet if, like the Yankee Knight at

King Arthur's court, we were to drop backward through time, we should probably find life squalid and empty of roses. Romance dwells not without, but within. The rose of romance thrives only miserably in the heart of the American woman. The two-headed monster of self-consciousness and self-seeking chills its bloom with icy breath. Americans are ashamed of their emotions. Europeans are proud of them.

Of the women I met abroad, Thusnelda, above all others, knew the magic that transmutes the dross of life into the pure gold of adventure. Every one she met became a tree in her landscape of dreams. She had a genius for being unhappy. The common bread of life became ambrosia in her hands if only she could moisten it with tears. She was distinctly a blossom of a civilization grown weary even of pleasure. She would have been morbid, not to say pathological, had she been an American. But in Europe the strange complexities of her temperament were not at variance with the complex and colorful life about her.

Thusnelda preferred a wreath of thorns to a wreath of roses. I am sure, Thusnelda, you will not take it amiss if I quote from your letters. You wrote some things that I should love to have written. I shall tear your golden words out of the jaws of oblivion. Who knows, perhaps this will make them immortal. I would have no objection to your printing my letters. I would regard it

as a compliment. But I am a professional writer, and you are not. I cannot afford to write beautiful letters. I write only for publication. Besides, in this country, the honeyed sonnets of lovers are turned into nooses to strangle their authors in divorce suits and actions for breach of promise!

I remember the evening Albertus introduced us. I knew how madly you adored him, and that his heart was a stone. And how much satisfaction you got out of your misplaced affection. And how I fell sick, and how kindly you nursed me, suspecting perhaps the possibility of a tragic affection.

I am afraid you idealized me, as you idealized all things. I know that in appearance I am not very poetic. I wear my hair short. I am a well-preserved young man, notwithstanding my twenty-five years, but I don't look the poet. You are right: I should have been dark. But how well you said it. I think it was in your second letter:

"*When God made you,*" you wrote, "*He willed to make you dark-complexioned and dark of hair, like some Italian or an Assyrian prince. But seeing that your hair was golden, he made your heart black! But no, I lie! It is more wicked to call you evil than any dream of evil that ever your delicate soul has conceived.*

"*How lovely are even the demons of your Inferno! Can you help it if your roses are drops of*

blood, and your songs poison-flowers? Ah! Those demons! They have stood by my cradle, too, and often I hearkened to their voices when the wind whistled around the walls of my paternal castle. Comraded by them I drifted upon the river of my youth. Sometimes they smile upon me out of the deep eyes of my lover. They will hover over my grave and chant an uncouth melody over this passionate heart of mine, that ever yearned for roses, and ever kissed the thorns!

"I am fond of you: I can never love you. I can only love the setting sun, when far away he crimsons the sky with yearning and with blood; or the perfume of jessamine; or the cry of the wild heron fleeing from autumnal days into sunnier regions; or the soul of Albertus Magnus, where sunset and odor and the freedom of wild things are woven into one. But you should not have sent me those poems. They knock at the door of my heart and whisper, and plaintively call to me through the night." . . . .

I had not been interested in that woman until I received her letter. She had made a poem of our commonplace meeting. Prose could not nestle in the folds of her garments; neither could sin soil her feet. Everything she touched became strange and romantic.

We subsequently spent a happy evening together. Thusnelda bared her soul to me, and I

am afraid I was a little shocked by some of the things she said. But that evening, charming as it was, had not prepared me for the following letter. In Thusnelda's imagination, our meeting had blossomed forth into a flower, glorious and golden; and when I re-read her letter I knew she was right. For there are miracles everywhere. But we have eyes that see not, and ears that hear not. The voice of Romance is audible in America only to poets and artists, and even they are a little ashamed of being different from others. This is the letter:

"Oh Night of all Nights! Like a fairy tale, so different, so miraculous and so strange! Why do you peer so questioningly into my world? Are your eyes so darkened that you can no longer look upon nudity, and turn half terrified from the naked soul? In my Kingdom there are only souls, naked and free and pure as in Paradise. Not that Paradise where the forbidden tree rustles prurient suggestions; but in that woodland evergreen where the gods walk with men, and beget a powerful race to which no Eden is out of reach, and no precipice too deep to be sounded.

"All that happens in the name of beauty and of greatness must be great and beautiful forever. We must be what the God in us determines us to be. The riddle of the Universe is child's play if once we know nature is beauty, beauty nature;

and if we carry God in our hearts, our lives will be prayer. But to pray is to yearn, to hope, to thank. These things I can give to you. Never ask more of me, but remember that I am the handmaid and lover of one who shall never touch me, and never love me. My love for him is sacred, and, like the host, may not be divided. Pray for me!" . . .

It will be supremely difficult for the healthy American animal to comprehend sympathetically the complexities of this woman. Neither can we understand that the non-attainment of desire may be more strangely seductive to imaginative natures than brutal and often unlovely realization. I confess that I myself was sorely puzzled at first by Thusnelda; but surely she has made my life richer and deeper, and unlocked for me gardens of spiritual passion, stranger and fiercer than raptures that root in the flesh. And I must also admit that I have had strong revulsions of feeling against her, and that on the whole I am glad that she will be unique in my life.

But surely Europe has strange allurements and secrets for barbarians from overseas.

Let me here set down the story of Gwendolen, the lovely bride of my childhood. We had been lovers since I was six and she was four. My love for her, I admit, was not my first romantic attachment, but the only one the perfume of which has

clung to me through the years. Before I met her, I believe, I wanted to marry our janitor's daughter, the family cook—good old camel!—and a beautiful princess forty years my senior, whom George Meredith has made the heroine of one of his novels, and who was a friend of my mother. That was many years ago, but the fire in her hair and in her heart will never go out. I speak of Helene von Racovitza.

Gwendolen had lovely brown ringlets. She was the most beautiful child I have ever seen. As I look upon her picture now, I clearly see that she was one of those elfin creatures, who, like *Peter Pan,* cannot abide on earth. We were parted when I was ten. I crossed the seas. We seldom wrote to each other. And then, some years later, she died. Strange to say, her death hardly stirred me. But when I went abroad, recently, for the first time since my childhood, I called on her mother, and then my youthful love came back to me with curious insistence. The mother, sweet woman, opened a little parcel of the dead girl's hair, and told me how Gwendolen had often spoken of me. When I was expected at the house, she had always asked for a new pinafore and looked at herself in the mirror, anxiously asking: "Do you think that he will like me in this?"

Never do we more poignantly realize our human impotence than when we vainly beat against the gray gate of eternity, striving to wrest the

wraith of one we love from the iron embrace of the relentless void. The wingèd seraphs of heaven have carried her away to a distant Aiden where perchance Annabel Lee welcomes her as a playmate. While these fancies flitted through my brain, the Jehu of my taxicab sat grinning at his wheel. Every minute of my pain was registered by the click of his meter. Every tear of my heart was an added obolus in his pocket.

From out the sea of faces of women in scarlet, of all my loves, curious and brilliant-hued, this one child's memory still abides beckoning to me from the Old World. Her little ghost will never see this. She will never know how tenderly I think of her. But can she really be dead? When the thought of her, even now, almost brings tears to my eyes? Maeterlinck is right. No one is dead, who still lives in the hearts of others.

But, good folks, accept my apologies. This has nothing to do with Europe.

CHAPTER X

INTELLECTUAL DRAMA

It is queer to have anybody ask you whether you have seen your grandmother's statue, and to confess that you have not. That is exactly what happened to me when I came to Berlin. Edwina Viereck had died many years before I was born. I had read of her beauty, and I had discovered, among my father's papers, some diaries penned by her hand. We had pictures of her at home, but I never had as much personal interest in my grandmother as I have had in Helen of Troy Town. But when I stood within the Royal Playhouse at Berlin before her loveliness hewn in marble, it seemed to me as though I felt for a moment upon my forehead the impress of her lips.

I was almost convinced that in the foyer, which had once re-echoed with her praise, I met the ghost of Edwina Viereck. I feel akin to her now. I can almost see her as she appeared on the stage. She is said to have been most wonderful in Schiller's *Turandot,* which nobody plays nowadays, when she challenged the beholder to look upon her beauty and not lose his reason. And there is a

poem, I have forgotten by whom, in which "*der Viereck wunderschönes Haupt*" is recounted in rapturous phrases. I was elated at first by that laurel-wreathed bust. It isn't everybody whose grandmother is immortalized in marble at the Royal Playhouse in Berlin.

Yet there was something saddening to me in the vision. Every statue is a memento of the evanescence of human life. There is something pathetic in the smile frozen in marble, while the beautiful lips of the woman herself are choked with dust and corruption. Besides, I was a little jealous that her image should smile upon others as it smiled upon me, her grandson. I could appreciate why the children of famous people often feel injured when strangers write understandingly of their parents. This curious egotism even prompts them sometimes to belittle a great man departed, if only to indicate that their knowledge of him is more intimate than the world's.

We would be shocked if we saw the bleaching bones of our immediate progenitors exposed to the gaze of the many in a museum of anatomy. Are we not humanly justified, therefore, if we resent an autopsy of their soul? If Mrs. Browning had been my mother, I would not like to listen to other people's interpretations of her passional sonnets. And yet I am fully aware that all art is a form of exhibitionism.

In the Harvard Psychological Laboratory I

once saw little white mice revolving in a circle, crazily, without pause, like dancing dervishes. Generations ago, Asiatic cunning had destroyed the sense of equilibrium in their ancestors to make toys of them for the delectation of almond-eyed women. So these, too, turn ever in a vicious circle, imagining, no doubt, perpetual gyration the proper and logical state of mouse. Even thus we, I sometimes fancy, obey not our own volition, but the monstrous caprice of an alien will. There is an irresistible—scientists would say compulsory—impulse that urges our pens and animates our chisels. We flout our nakedness in the market-place, and turn our grandmothers into copy!

My mother's father, Wilhelm Viereck, was the founder of the German Theater in San Francisco. My father's mother was Edwina Viereck. Nevertheless, I have not inherited from my grandparents any instinctive love for the stage, although I have been in intimate relation with the theater all my life. Our theatrical conditions are hardly calculated to foster such a love. The drama in America is the lowest of the arts. She is the handmaid of the mimic propensity inherited by us from our simian sires. Theatricalism has chained the Muse to the wheel of its motor. Plays are written to order. The author's name hardly appears on the program.

I have never been one of those who place the

drama on the uppermost rung of the ladder of art. A poem, a statue, a picture is wonderful, each in itself. It needs no interpreters. It summons no other art or artifice to its aid. The drama depends for its support on various scaffoldings, although the great dramas of Shakespeare and Æschylus are no less effective in the closet than on the stage. The little dramas of contemporary American playwrights, like fairy-gold when the charm is withdrawn, are tatters and rags if divorced from the footlights. The great dramatists have written to express themselves. We write to express others, usually actors of inferior mental caliber. Shakespeare garbed the body of the Muse with new splendor. We, with rare exceptions, manufacture dramatic tinsel to cover up the mental and physical deficiencies of some over-advertised female.

In Shakespeare's days the mimes were called "shadows." The substance, the play, remained after their exit. In America to-day the play is the shadow. We have no brains for abstractions either in politics or æsthetics. We are swayed solely by the personality of the actor. Julia Marlowe is more real to us than Shakespeare himself. We place the shadow above the substance. In America the playwright is successful if he adapts himself to the actor. Abroad the actor is successful if he adapts himself to the playwright. Abroad they have great dramas and great actors. We

have no dramas. And we develop not actors, but virtuosi.

There are many theaters in Berlin,—I don't know how many. The royal theaters, being bulwarks of conservatism, are not regarded seriously by the critics. The interest of the elect centers around the two great rival playhouses of Brahms and of Reinhardt, the *Lessing Theater* and the *Deutsche Theater.* Brahms stands for realism, Reinhardt for everything else. Brahms has discovered Ibsen for Germany. Reinhardt is a cerebral Belasco. Belasco wrings our hearts. Reinhardt excites our brains. Germany looks to him for curious and gorgeous intellectual experiments. Reinhardt has discovered Shakespeare, and, of late, he discovered Goethe. Or, to be more precise, he has rediscovered the classics. He takes *Faust* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and translates the language of centuries gone into the language of the twentieth century. His Faust is a modern. His Romeos and his Juliets are our contemporaries. He makes no impious attempt to superimpose his own meanings upon those of the author, but he strikingly interprets and brilliantly illuminates him.

I am not surprised that Berlin refused to accept Beerbohm Tree's dazzling but superficial versions of Shakespeare. Sothern would probably meet with a similar disastrous fate. The Germans are the greatest interpreters of Shakespeare. They

are in sympathy with him. They understand him —all of him. I never understood Shakespeare until I had seen *King Lear* and *As You Like It* staged by Reinhardt and Felix Holländer, his able assistant. There is no *nuance* they permit to escape them. They interpret alike the lovely and the coarse. They discover even in the plays something of the spirit of the mysterious Sonnets. There are moments when Mr. W. H. flits across the stage. The smile of the Shakespeare bust seems less enigmatic than of yore, his personality less inscrutable and less distant, after we have caught glimpses of his face in that playhouse of Reinhardt's.

Reinhardt employs a revolving stage, consisting of several sections. Each of these sections is a stage in itself. Only one at a time is seen by the audience. This arrangement enables the stage manager to shift his scenes with incredible swiftness. Shakespeare thereby regains the spontaneity which he loses when the scenes are torn out of their logical artistic sequence by the requirements of modern stage-craft. Reinhardt sometimes permits the stage to rotate with the curtain up, revealing a succession of pictures displaying the characters in their simultaneous actions. We see how, behind the scenes, they carry out the poet's intentions. Thus we visualize the action, as it must have evolved in the brain of Shakespeare.

Adjoining the *Deutsche Theater* Reinhardt has

reared a shrine to art—with a capital A. The Chamber-plays (*Kammerspiele*) are to the drama what chamber music is to the opera. The little theater housing the chamber-plays is a jewel-box lined with silk. Everything is subdued and costly. Costumed attendants silently hand you the program. Prices are almost prohibitive. The intellectual middle classes are barred with triple brass from this holy of holies. The elect go to the Chamber-plays as reverently as one goes to church. Sometimes the silence becomes almost audible.

Strange women in strange garbs, and uncouth men with curious beards and long hair, the Supermen's Brigade, are here assembled in solemn conclave with the aristocracy of birth and finance. There are furs, and antique brooches, wristbands serpentine and suggestive, shimmering velvets and rustling silks. The faces of the beholders are placid. Aloof, intellectual, calm, they analyze the performance. Emotion is suppressed. No applause is permitted. The intellectual pabulum presented at the Chamber-plays is distinctly *haut-gout*. We know what awaits us. We must not be surprised at anything. In this assemblage Stirner is a truism, Nietzsche *passé*. They would listen with imperturbable intellectual hauteur to stage adaptations from the medical data of Magnus Hirschfeld and Havelock Ellis.

The actors are men and women endowed with brains. They have a serious interest in art. Act-

ing to them is more than "business." They are all individualities with the stamp of genius, who willingly submerge their egos in the harmonious whole. Wherever Reinhardt rules, intellectual values are at a premium. Style determines destinies. Bernard Shaw thrives in his care. The Chamber-Play House is the citadel of the bizarre. It is a hot-house for exotic genius, a mansion of many moods. Within its confine poets may safely play with intellectual lightning. The psychologist may with impunity empty his vials of pestilential bacilli.

This public is immune against every mental disease. Unlike the naïve audiences of our American play-houses, we find here grown men who have passed safely through the ailments of intellectual immaturity. Schnitzler's orgasmic *Reigen* leaves them unstartled. The hysterical Greeks of Hugo von Hofmannsthal, that brilliant young Viennese, arouse a responsive chord in their breasts. They smile contemptuously at Max Halbe's *Jugend*—not a single character in that play might have been lifted from Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*. But they accept at their proper value Wedekind's dramatic grotesques. They appreciate *Frühling's Erwachen*.

Let me tell you about *Frühling's Erwachen (Spring's Awakening)*. Wedekind, its author, is two-fifths a clown and three-fifths a genius. He is peculiar, bizarre, uneven. But in *Frühling's*

Erwachen he has produced a masterpiece, because the subject, puberty, is in tune with his unbalanced genius. His individual mood for once coincides with a world mood.

Wedekind's play, the *Salome* of Wilde, Barrie's *Peter Pan,* and Shaw's *Cæsar and Cleopatra* are to my mind the four representative plays of the century.

Peter Pan embodies the imperishable longing for eternal youth; being very young, he is conscious of the insufferable burthen of years upon the shoulders of the race. For in youth, as Wordsworth knew, we are still close to the infinite. He stands upon the beginning of an arch in the bridge of time spanning the void between being and not-being. His backward glance more surmises than sees glimpses of chains unending. *Cæsar and Cleopatra* is the supreme expression of sophistication. Shaw's Cæsar is the Superman conscious of his part in the world's evolution. He attains through cerebration what Peter Pan knows by instinct. Salome is the gorgeous encasement of morbid beauty and misdirected desire. The theme of Wedekind's *Frühling's Erwachen* is universally human. The dramatist unfolds before our eyes puberty with its pure and ecstatic affections and its curious sensual nightmares. Wilde, with the unfailing veracity of the great poet, has doomed Salome in his play, as she is doomed in the process of evolution. Normal humanity, of

which Wedekind's youthful hero, Melchior, is a typical incarnation, overcomes the perils besetting its path. Wedekind's hero dallies with death, as we all dally with death, but in the end life is triumphant.

The supreme moment in Wedekind's play is the scene in the graveyard, where the boy wavers between life and death. His old playfellow, who had blown out his brains, stands there with his head under his arm, preaching the doctrine of contentment in *Nirvana*. At this moment there appears Life, a gentleman with a mask, cynical, cruel and lavish and kind. He orders the dead boy to return to the grave, and declares that the philosophy of resignation is the philosophy of sour grapes. With fine and healthy cynicism he invites Melchior to supper. "After what I have done," Melchior exclaims, "no supper can bring peace to my soul." "That," remarks the gentleman, "depends on the supper." They go out together, Life and the boy, deserting the tombs for the banquet. The dead boy takes his head under his arm and resignedly returns to his coffin, murmuring to himself, "Now I shall raise my tombstone, which that clumsy chap has upset, warm my hands in corruption and smile. . . ."

In the history of dramatic literature there is worthy to be mentioned in the same breath with the finale of Wedekind's play only the graveyard scene in *Hamlet*. But it is not the sort of thing

to which the Tired Business Man—that atrocious bogey raised whenever Art lifts her head in the American theater—would repair for a tonic.

The intellectual stamp dooms a play to failure in America. The absence of it dooms it to failure abroad. Of course, *The Merry Widow* is an importation from Europe. And even abroad, I admit, the Merry Widow waltz was more popular than the dance of *Salome*. But a distinction is made between entertainment and art. We cater only to entertainment. And if we have an idea, we attempt to disguise the intellectual germ in a thick layer of saccharine sentiment and theatrical clap-trap. Mentality is written over the stage door abroad. Cerebral, restless, the German mind seeks ever for new spheres of expression. Thus, the late Meta Illing, a distinguished and beautiful actress, endeavored to speak to her compatriots through the medium of English. Her English Theater was intended primarily for the Germans, not for English and American visitors, and was patronized by the Kaiser. If some manager were to put on *The Sunken Bell* in Chinese he would likewise find an interested audience, at least in Berlin. Goethe's *Iphigenia* was played in Esperanto under the direction of Emanuel Reicher. There is everywhere the desire to conquer new territory by shattering the barriers of foreign tongues. A tendency toward universality is conspicuous.

Frau Dumont, of Düsseldorf, has attempted to purge the drama with its eternal problems from purely local associations. She has abolished decoration, and everything merely temporal or limiting the message of art. There are no properties, no scenery at all. Her background consists merely of an immense sheet of linen, sometimes with chromatic borders, and illuminated from behind with simple, dominant colors defining the basic mood of the scene. There are no footlights, nothing to distract the attention from the words of the poet. Frau Dumont's method should be tremendously effective in staging the mystic plays of Maeterlinck and of Yeats, where the characters, vague and elusive, pass shadowlike before our vision. The revolving stage is the proper medium for Shakespeare with his definite outlines and his vivid perceptions of life. The stage of Frau Dumont, with its glimpses of infinity and vague suggestions, represents aptly the unique mentality of the author of *The Death of Tintagiles*.

Satiated with all things, the ancient civilizations are ever ready to hail the new. Out of the mental unrest of modern Germany is born the tenth of the Muses, the new art of nudity. Many things that once were natural are to-day arts. There was a time when men's motions were naturally graceful, when dance was instinctive. But in the course of time mankind forgot; and what was once a func-

tion of every human being, is resurrected to-day in the polished art of Isadora Duncan. Song, we are told, is older than speech. The conversation of men in olden days was rhythmic. Poetry to-day is an art confined to the few. In the golden ages of the Greeks and in the Paradise of the Hebrew, men were splendid and nude. Then came sin, and we swathed our bodies in hideous clothes, and were ashamed of them. And so long have we hidden and marred them, that at last nudeness, like singing and dancing, has become an accomplishment.

The two chief German exponents of the new art are Olga Desmond and Herr Salge, who have given a number of performances in Berlin before the Society of the Friends of Beauty, and later in public, in which they went perfectly nude through a series of beautiful poses. They made the curves of their bodies express meanings as definite as sculpture and music. The Greeks, I am sure, would have welcomed this new addition to the ranks of the Muses. But in Germany, as I have said, the incarnation of Euphorion is not as yet wholly consummated. The new art was hotly discussed throughout the Empire, and the police were called upon to interfere with Olga Desmond's performances outside of Berlin. The matter was debated in the Reichstag, and, strange to say, the Government itself took up the cudgels for the new Muse of Nudity. The Reichstag attended

in a body one of Olga Desmond's performances. Imagine how Congress would behave in an analogous instance!

Distinguished artists, among these Reinhold Begas, and Professor Herter, the creator of the Heine fountain in New York, hastened to the defense of Desmond. Begas insisted that the naked body cannot arouse prurient speculation. "Analyze your feelings," he said, "and you will realize that the erotic element hardly enters." Herter asserted that the nude body, at a proper distance in a beautiful pose, is always æsthetic. "I would not know," he said, "how to represent sensuality nude." An interesting point was made by Professor Goetz. Often, in seeing a picture, a landscape, we joyfully exclaim, "Why, I have witnessed that effect before in nature." In a similar manner we are more apt to appreciate the nude in sculpture if we have stored in our minds perceptions of beautiful nude bodies. This "sad late age" is extremely poor in these; so poor, indeed, that the public interest is almost exclusively confined to the head, because we, most of us, have no opportunities to see beautiful bodies.

The new art of nudity, as we have seen, has so far been primarily defended from the point of view of the sculptor. When the renaissance of the Hellenic spirit in the twentieth century is complete, it will need no defense beyond its beauty. The Muse of Nudity is not the youngest, but the

oldest of all the Muses. In her domain, the extremes of civilization, the sophisticated and primitive nature, are blended. We are no more ready for her than were the monks of the Middle Ages. Before an audience composed, even partly, of Carrie Nations and of Anthony Comstocks, the art of nakedness would be a thing obscene.

The founders of our own New Theater would never invite the tenth of the Muses to reveal within its sacred precincts the miracle of her loveliness. This theater, declared Governor Hughes, at the formal opening, November 6th, 1909, shall be devoted to art. But it shall never become a "museum of abnormalities." Yet what is all art but a museum of abnormalities? Hamlet, Macbeth, Lear, the tortured creatures of Hauptmann and of Ibsen, are hardly conventional normal types. In biology the exception proves the rule. Art through the abnormal depicts the normal. Perfectly normal people are perfectly dull. The dramatic struggle calls for the contention between conventional and eccentric social forces.

The province of art is to provide caviar for the general. If the general refuse this fare, then, indeed, are we in a difficult plight. Instead of intelligence endowed with millions, let us have millions endowed with intelligence. Intelligent artistic appreciation is rare in native America. The intellectual founder of the New Theater, Heinrich Conried, was an Austrian subject. The first great

essentially American play, *The Melting Pot,* was written by an English Jew. And it is perhaps significant that the first American author heard in the New Theater bears the aromatic and un-American name of Knoblauch.

Yet I am perhaps unjust to the American playwright. Clyde Fitch's last play, *The City,* is almost Elizabethan in its terror and its strength. Charles Klein and Augustus Thomas may yet purge their systems of the germs of moralomania. We shall have to reckon with them again when they rediscover that in the drama action speaks louder than words. William Vaughn Moody, in a splendid but isolated attack of forgetfulness, wrote *The Great Divide.* We may at least hope that he will forget himself again in the future. Percy Mackaye always soars beyond his strength. He is the Icarus of American drama. But his daring, at least, is an encouraging omen. Edward Sheldon, the latest product of Harvard's dramatic nursery, aims to reconcile the Bowery drama with the problem play. Eugene Walter, groping likewise toward a new dramatic form which shall combine the antithetical principles espoused by the Third Avenue Theater and the Théâtre Antoine, also draws upon the exhaustless well of melodrama. We may say that melodrama degenerates in his hands. In his third acts it is vice, not virtue, that triumphs. His art seems to be melodrama inverted. Here, however, degeneration—applying

the term with scientific discrimination—denotes an upward step in evolution. From the decomposition of melodrama will issue, perhaps, the drama of the future.

We have authors; we have theaters. Where shall we find a public? In Paris, in Berlin, premières are public events. A new play is hotly discussed. Actors are known to have been egged. We view the stage with stony indifference. Until Sothern's interpretation of *Hamlet,* or Faversham's conception of a new play by Stephen Phillips, is to us all a matter of vital and personal interest, the New Theater will be only an arch of promise in our theatrical sky.

CHAPTER XI

THINGS LITERARY

I AM a great believer in antinomies. Every truth, like the bee its sting, carries within it its own negation. There is not one truth, but many. No one has ever uttered more than a half truth. Those who, like Whitman, attempt to express the whole truth are necessarily inconsistent. Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* utters a half truth. And the Hebrew prophets have uttered a half truth. Those who desire the whole truth must needs reconcile the irreconcilable. They must harmonize the Sermon on the Mount with the egotistical doctrines of Stirner. Life is a shining jewel. We can never see it whole. We may only hope to reflect the glint of some of its facets.

I am aware that I am dreadfully inconsistent. But I am not ashamed. The Book of Life is full of inconsistencies. Why should we attempt to be consistent if the Author of all things has no compunction in apparently contradicting himself? Even if we had glimpses of the ultimate truth, how could we express the infinite in terms of the finite? Besides, we could be truthful, even in a

limited sense, only with an intellectual double, whose mind was a replica of our own. For those whose mentality is on a slightly different plane from ours we must translate our mental vibrations. The symbols that convey one meaning to us may convey antithetical notions to others. In order to make our thoughts recognizable, we must disguise them. We must lie, to be truthful.

I have in the past compared literary Germany to a madhouse. Insanity, I insisted, was the bedfellow of her genius. And I was perfectly right. I have nothing to modify. I have stated perfectly one half of the truth. I shall now contradict myself flatly. I shall express the other half of this puzzling antinomy.

If I were to describe the literary atmosphere of Germany in one word, I should say that it is pervaded by *health.* There is nothing of the sickly spirit that stigmatizes the literature of the New World. We have stunted the growth of letters. We cram genius into the bed of Procrustes. Germany gives full scope to self-expression. We ask brambles of the pomegranate tree. We prune the poet's inspiration. We measure by the same standard the pine tree and the hedge. We have men of *esprit,* but we compel them to hide their light under the bushel of our stupidity.

Besides, we despise purely imaginative values —except in Wall Street. The late Richard Wat-

son Gilder was highly elated when, at a festival of the *Félibres* in France, he was introduced as "*M. le poète.*"

"You see," he explained to me, "I had come from a country where it is almost an insult to be called a poet."

Our indifference to true creative ability is so intense that we have even driven our greatest imaginative genius, barring Poe, from his proper field of literary endeavor into the unfamiliar realm of Arctic exploration. When Dr. Cook came back to us as the discoverer of the North Pole,—a dull and meaningless feat,—we hailed him as a national hero. But when we began to suspect that his tale was not a recital of vulgar fact, but the indisputable evidence of high imaginative endowment, we flouted him! We have barred his bust from the Hall of Fame, together with that of the author of "Gordon Pym." Those who believe with Wilde that the aim of art is lying, must place Dr. Frederick A. Cook above Commander Robert E. Peary. Anybody might discover the pole; but not everybody could create highly-colored and eloquent prose, hypnotizing two hemispheres with its measured cadence. Even from the point of view of mere human justice, it seems unfair that we, a nation of fakers, should thus disown the greatest exponent of our national trait.

We are more afraid of originality than of the Devil. The "six best sellers" might all have

been written by one man, or rather, by one woman. Our books, like our clothes and our morals, are ready-made. In German letters it is personality that counts. Germany regards seriously only those who have something to say. She is less concerned about the little niceties of expression. Our books are written with uniform excellence in irreproachable style. I am sure that most of our authors would pass the college entrance examinations in English. I am equally sure that the most distinguished German writers would be sadly deficient from the point of view of the manufacturers of lingual patterns. Their style is individual, not academic.

We are forced to write down to the mediocre level of an imaginary public. We painstakingly remove the vitals from the body of our writing. Editors and publishers apparently have an exceedingly low opinion of their patron, the public. I have more faith in the reader. His intelligence, I admit, is not usually of a high order, but he cannot be as inane as the fodder supplied to him by the magazines. Occasionally an original idea somehow makes its way into print in spite of the editor, and in spite of him scores a success. At once the publisher slyly degrades it into a pattern. Abroad authors are afraid of imitating even themselves. We quench their genius in the monotony of the treadmill. We value them merely for certain products, just as we prize the stuffed goose for its

torpid liver. Our literature is as sick as a torpid goose.

Life, health, is development, variety, growth. There is something distinctly diseased in the mental frame of authors who year in, year out, squeeze from their cerebrums the same thin, colorless fluid. We measure even the exact amount of the drivel that shall ooze from their minds. We rigorously regulate the bulk of a book. In Germany there is a delightful variety in bookmaking and a corresponding variety in prices. An author writes because he has something to say. When he has said it, he stops. If he cannot express himself in one volume, no publisher will dare to prescribe mechanical limits to the flights of his inspiration.

The late Otto Julius Bierbaum was a typical German *litérateur*. Otto Julius Bierbaum was a healthy *litérateur*. He was healthier than the editor of *The Ladies' Home Journal*. He was healthy, because he was often morbid. He fully revealed himself in his books. No American publisher would have dared to publish his rhythmical studies of passion. And the very bulk of his books would have crushed his fortunes. *Prinz Kukuck,* the most important essay in fiction of his later years, like Gaul, is divided into three parts, published in three expensive volumes of unequal length. And it is Gallic in flavor, its sub-title running thus: "*Life, Adventures and Descent to Hell of a Voluptuary.*" The book portrays strong

normal passions and curious erotic vagaries. There is a suggestion of Nero and a suggestion of Borgia.

The circle of passion revolving in the pages before us completes the cycle of human perversion, from the sick passion of mad Roman Cæsars to mediæval incest and the vices of Alexander VI. The novelist never moralizes. He narrates incidents as they happen. But you feel that his ethical code conflicts with the tables of Moses. He is not ashamed of portraying the purely sensual. He avowedly loves the flesh, but, being a modern, burdened down with the heritage of Hamlet, he cannot divorce it from mind. He is not in the least concerned about the reader's comfort. He tarries for a hundred pages where he is interested, and disposes of a decade in a sentence, where he is not. But when I lay a book of his aside, I feel, in the words of Whitman, that I have touched a *man*. He was not the impersonal narrator, but, like Dickens, confided in us as in a friend.

The cultured American keeps his best as well as his worst to himself. Even Crawford, for whom I have always had a tender regard, never fully revealed the depth and height of his being. Bierbaum exposed both to our gaze. That is why his books are of permanent value. Ships running at half-speed will never traverse the ocean of eternity. In the successor to *Prinz Kukuck, Selt-*

same Geschichten, stories of the weird, Bierbaum has given us mainly his worst. His mannerisms are become unbearable. His reflections, tedious. He is as garrulous as a parrot. The flower of genius has run to seed. But that is inevitable, natural, and therefore hardly a symptom of disease.

While Bierbaum's vision of life is normal in its total effect, Hans Heinz Ewers evolves out of his sadistic imagination nightmares of cruelty and lust. He is a Poe plus sex, minus style. Ewers and his curious stories of obsession and carnage are read as widely as Poe. We would have shunned Poe if he had strayed into the byways of sex, as he has strayed into the byways of horror. And we would probably jail the publisher of Ewers's fantastic short stories. We would certainly regard the author as being beyond the pale.

Germany being less morbid is less squeamish than we. She merely expects the poet to ride his Pegasus skillfully. And no one is naïve enough to confuse his literary performances with his private morals. I have not met Ewers, but I have seen his picture and that of his wife, a charming woman of somewhat more robust fiber than he. Ewers seems to be a delicate, one might almost say fragile, creature. I am sure that in life he would turn in disgust from the dreadful visions that delectate his readers. Which reminds me of that bourgeois Maupassant, Heinz Tovote.

Tovote's family life is an idyl in the German Gomorrah. He is an adorable little fellow, with a leaning to *embonpoint*. But his stories are very naughty. Nevertheless, in his own narrow field he is unparalleled. If I had a daughter, I would gladly entrust her, unchaperoned, to the care of a poet of passion. And if I had a son, I would no less gladly choose a passional poetess for his companion. Like the proverbial dog whose melodious voice constantly irritates our ear drums, the poet of passion is comparatively innocuous. Notwithstanding his protestations, he will not bite.

The most ardent singer of the flesh in Germany, Marie Madeleine, is the conventional wife of a pensioned general. But upon her forehead gleams the diadem of song. In her voluptuous, rhythmic and wonderfully passionate poems she approaches Swinburne himself. She lacks the knowledge of books, the erudition of Swinburne. She surpasses him in the knowledge of human passion. She has sung of Antinous, and she has sung of Sappho, and of the "white implacable Aphrodite." Her passional studies are cries from the depths of her potential selves. In reality, she is perfectly respectable and perfectly *bourgeoise*. Her life is wholesome because it is complete. She is virtuous in her private life, but a Faustina in song. Impulses which, if suppressed, would have poisoned her life, escape through the safety-valve of literary expression. The antitoxin of genius disinfects them for

us. No poet living to-day has breathed into his song more voluptuous music than this:

Ich sah dein Bild die ganze Nacht,
Und in mir stöhnte dumpf das Tier,
All meine Sehnsucht schrie nach dir
Die ganze Nacht, die ganze Nacht.

* * * * * * *

Du lächelst stolz—"Ich hab's gewusst!"
Und weisst doch nicht wie ich mich sehne
Zu graben meine Raubtierzähne
In deine nackte Jünglingsbrust.

The genius of Marie Madeleine has found its supreme embodiment in *Auf Kypros,* a collection of verses published when she was a mere slip of a girl. At once she became the fashion. Imitators sprang up like fungi. But her first sonorous utterance was followed by imbecile and frivolous verse, and mediocre fiction. In her later books, notably in a volume entitled *In Seligkeit und Sünden,* she has again redeemed herself. Her very unevenness is a sign of health. Like Bierbaum, she suppresses neither her best nor her worst, leaving the verdict on the knees of the gods.

The German author, as I have said, is less polished than we. He rises to greater heights and descends to immeasurably lower levels. If an author has once made a reputation for himself among us in any peculiar field, he is secure unto

the day of his death, unless he insists upon venturing into unexplored regions. A new idea is fatal to his reputation. Occasionally an intrepid writer has dared to be original, but invariably the flesh-pot has proved too strong a lure for him in the end. Mark Twain has written some of the most serious books of the century. He is the most serious writer I know. But we refuse to treat his book on Joan of Arc, or his masterful study of the Shakespeare problem, with respectful consideration. We laugh at the clown, even if his grimaces are convulsions of death.

In Germany, however, critics have no patience with a man who repeats himself. The new plays of Sudermann and of Hauptmann are in no way inferior to the antecedent performances of their authors. But Germany asks higher achievements in divers fields, and is suspicious, moreover, of too sure a technique. Ludwig Fulda, the translator of Molière and the Molière of his epoch, has suffered all his life because a well-meaning and deluded fairy has endowed him excessively with verbal and metrical skill.

Modern Germans love the big things roughly hewn out of stone. Michael Angelo and Rodin, not Phidias, are to them the embodiments of genius. Gerhardt Hauptmann has reached such a degree of proficiency in his art that his admirers have begun to suspect the genuine quality of his gifts. They have turned away from him and

raised his brother Karl upon their shields. Karl, they say, is the greater poet, Gerhardt the greater craftsman. Karl is surely a man of genius. But I shall never forget the lovely face of Rautendelein, sister to Peter Pan. Karl has not conjured a Rautendelein into being. His novels are masterly delineations of the lives of the lower classes. I have no use for the deservedly poor,—least of all in fiction. Their diseases are so uninteresting. The diseases of the cultured, like the pearl, that disease of the oyster, are often of delicate texture.

Both brothers regard their work with a seriousness that is terrifying in the sense in which Niagara, or any other great cosmic manifestation, is terrifying. American writers consider their profession a trade. We have a sense of humor, at least of caricature, but no sense of the dignity of our calling. If success eludes the literary tradesman, he will readily change his literary complexion, as a traveling salesman deserts men's clothing for ladies' hose. Not the law of his growth, but the demand of the market, diverts his talents into new avenues. The law of growth determines the metamorphoses of the genuine artist. The moment European writers of reputation cease to grow, the elect turn away from them, even if the rabble still worship awhile in the forsaken sanctuary.

The European writer is ever goaded on by the dread of displeasing the critical Grand Moguls who pronounce his destiny. A critic may often be

greater than the author whom he brilliantly misinterprets. Such a critic is Alfred Kerr, whose word is fate in the *Neue Rundschau.* He is distinctly *creative:* he makes and he mars. Even the greatest in literature owe their renown in part to their critics. *Faust* and *Hamlet* are greater today than they were when their authors conceived them, because the greatest critical minds of several centuries have made them the storehouses of their intellectual treasures. Every commentary adds a new and connotative value to the original.

Critics are taken more seriously on the continent than with us. But then, we may count our *creative* critics on the fingers of one hand. James Huneker may be said to be the index finger, pointing the way to the new. Paul Elmer More is the thumb, pointing backward. William Marion Reedy is the middle finger. The little finger is Percival Pollard. I cannot make up my mind as to who is the fifth; but I suspect Michael Monahan. Germany and France each have one for every finger and every toe. The wholesale fear of the critics forces European writers to draw upon that mysterious and exhaustless well of inspiration which William James describes as the "second wind" of the mind.

German literature, like French literature, is an oligarchy. German authors write up to the few. We write down to the many. The elect are swift to recognize counterfeit values. They are swift

to recognize even the uncut gem. Hugo Bertsch, a German-American laborer, crude and untaught, won instant and sensational recognition through his novel, *Die Geschwister.* We would have "turned down" his unorthographic copy with a contemptuous smile. Hugo Bertsch, like Shakespeare, writes better than he spells. Our novelists spell better than they write. German writers give us even their crudities—they might be gems. The idol heedlessly dragged to the junk shop may be the true God after all! But the dead arm of Solomon cannot hold those critical spirits in thrall. Germany will not quench her thirst with stagnant waters.

Not long ago I remarked, half in jest, to Karl Hauptmann: "Who is greater, you or your brother?" Whereupon Karl replied with fine dignity: "Neither my brother's life work, nor mine, is completed. I should look upon myself as a corpse if it were. It is too early to close the books. We have neither of us ceased to develop. We are not ready yet to be judged." Both men have passed the age of forty. Karl is almost fifty. Had they been born among us, the grooves of their lives would have been established forever. Their epitaphs would lie all written out in the pigeon-holes of the press. And precious little would there be to add, though they live to the Biblical age. But at this day no man can predict what startling new developments may divert the

genius of these brothers into unsuspected and novel channels.

I might also have spoken of my friend, Johannes Schlaf, the father of German realism. Schlaf, having run the gamut from realism to mysticism, is again groping his way toward new ideals. Arno Holz, his former brother in arms and letters, has likewise passed through many curious metamorphoses. At present he amuses himself by writing poems without rhyme or meter, in the shape of inverted pyramids, such as this. (I borrow the excellent translation of my friend, William Ellery Leonard.)

BUDDHA

By night around my temple grove
watch seventy brazen cows.
A thousand mottled stone lampions flicker.

Upon a red throne of lac
I sit in the Holy of Holies.

Over me
thro' the beams of sandalwood,
in the ceiling's open square,
stand the stars.

I blink.

Were I now to rise up
my ivory shoulders would splinter the roof;

and the oval diamond upon my brow
would stave-in the moon.

The chubby priests may snore away.
I rise not up.
I sit with legs crossed under
and observe my navel.

It is a blood red ruby
in a naked belly of gold.

Stephan George, the Viennese pre-Raphaelite, has even reformed the German language. In his curious pastels he employs an orthography distinctly at war with usage. The genius of modern Germany, alert and nervous, is always ready to hail new stars and new gods.

It would be futile to deny the presence of a morbid strain in continental letters. Certain writers, like Ewers and the imitators of Marie Madeleine, are too strongly allured by the purely perverse. But even corruption is not always without beauty. In the first stages of cancer a woman's skin is said to be almost pellucid. The Blessed Damozels of Rossetti are distinctly consumptive. Sickness, Heine says, is perhaps the ultimate cause of creation.

Krankheit ist wol der letzte Grund
Des ganzen Schöpfungsdrangs gewesen,
Erschaffend wurde ich gesund,
Erschaffend konnte ich genesen.

Sickness in itself is merely nature's attempt to regain her balance. Much that seems morbid in modern German civilization merely indicates nature's struggle for health. The poison is not suppressed; it breaks out, runs its course, and insures the health of the patient. The butterfly in its ugly transitional stage impresses the student with its promise of future beauty. And much that we regard as diseased may thus be prophetic of a larger culture. Viewed in this light, even the atrocities of *Simplicissimus* and *Jugend* are mollified. Most comic journals and many books published in Germany would be barred by postal tyranny from the United States mails. *Simplicissimus* and *Jugend,* having been warned repeatedly by our postal authorities, will regale us in the future with editions resembling at least in one respect the boy-choir of the Vatican.

I have always entertained for letter carriers the tender affection bestowed in olden times upon couriers. The average letter carrier, I am sure, is a man of strong moral principles, an impeccable father and a peerless husband. He has passed through the gate of the Civil Service examination. He is a useful citizen. I have no grudge against him. But if some Jack-in-office, or post-office, had the preposterous presumption to inquire into my literary morals, or to determine questions of artistic *finesse,* I would unpleasantly remind him of

the fate of Marsyas; or, like Oberon, present him with the decoration of Bottom.

The freedom of literature, as well as the freedom of speech, is more unrestrained in the monarchies of Europe than in the republic described by an unconscious ironist as "the land of the free." The postal clerk abroad who would dare to lay hands on a work like the *Kreutzer Sonata,* would be drowned in a flood of derision. We look on with folded arms when the machinery of the federal government, set into motion by an ignorant clerk, crushes our vaunted freedom of speech. And we forget that the monster of federal assumption, like the vampire, grows in strength with each victim.

Of course, not every book published abroad would be in danger of literary assassination in America. Of late the genius of Ellen Key, the distinguished Swede; and of Franciska Mann, and Gabrielle Reuter and Ricarda Huch, her prophets in Berlin, have been diverting the tide of fashion from sanctuaries where amorous peccadilloes are tantamount to devotion to new and saner ideals. Although the *outré* and the morbid color modern German literature, the solid successes of the last few years, *Jörn Uhl, Die Buddenbrucks, Königliche Hoheit,* and *Götz Krafft,* glow with health, not putrescence. They are a splendid affirmation of the inherent soundness of the German people.

CHAPTER XII

THE SAGE OF COPENHAGEN

COPENHAGEN with its wharves and its ships is a picturesque place. My knowledge of geography is rudimentary, but Denmark, I believe, is surrounded by water. Strangely enough, the city of Copenhagen can be reached directly by train from Berlin. Twice in the journey a giant ferry carries locomotive and cars with the passengers across large stretches of water. Having once arrived in Copenhagen, you don't know what to do with yourself. There are only four things of interest in Denmark: The Glyptothek, the Thorwaldsen Museum, George Brandes, and the grave of Hamlet. After you have seen these, nothing remains. The Glyptothek gladly throws open its gates to you; the Thorwaldsen Museum hospitably invites you. I should not advise you to visit George Brandes. But by all means visit the grave of Hamlet. I have denied myself this pleasure. Now throughout the years the vision of that grave will lure my fancy to Denmark.

Professor Brandes informs me that Hamlet was never in Elsinore; neither is he there buried.

According to legend, Hamlet was a minor vassal king in Jutland; Zealand, where Shakespeare dislocated him, knew him not. But when Shakespeare's countrymen demanded to mingle their tears with his ashes, an alert innkeeper, Marianlysts, of Elsinore, erected a stone-heap there some twenty years ago, revered ever since by generations of tourists as the grave of Ophelia's obese and unsatisfactory lover.

The Professor, I fear, is an incurable pedant. Those who direct their steps to Elsinore worship the spirit of Hamlet. His skeleton is to them a matter of utter indifference. Every grave is spurious but for faith. The mockery of this tomb would be no less hollow even if Hamlet's carcass had stained the coffinboard with the obscene juices of putrefaction.

Poets are lords of circumstance; they are lords also of geography, from the terrace of Elsinore to the coast of Bohemia. Too often, alas, the reality fails to tally with fiction. The world, therefore, owes a debt of gratitude to the imaginative innkeeper for having given to Hamlet's ghost the local habitation prescribed by sentiment. I am sure that to me at any rate Hamlet's grave, unvisited, will be more inspiring than if I had actually seen it. I never have the proper emotions when I ought to have them. I should probably feel very stupid if I were to encounter the ghost of the Dane. I would not know how to take him.

A man whose temperament is defined by his faulty digestion must change considerably when he himself is digested.

In Copenhagen I saw all there is to be seen. The vanity of my host was deeply pricked because I stayed only two days. He scornfully suggested that I should take half a day longer to study Norway and Sweden.

They are very proud of their Glyptothek in Copenhagen. I have never cared for picture galleries and museums. Like anthologies, they are always so dreadfully disappointing. Recently somebody edited a compilation of English verse sifted from several standard anthologies. I read the book from cover to cover. There was not a single poem but had been approved of by seven previous compilers. And yet the final impression was unsatisfactory. English literature had never seemed so poverty-stricken to me.

If a poet of minor rank had fathered all these pieces as the presumptive author, the volume, I am convinced, would hardly have created more than a ripple. Poems, like pictures, need frames. There must be a personality behind them. Only two or three poems clung to me after I had finished the volume. In an anthology hundreds of instruments seem to play as many tunes, all at the same time, producing grotesque and incongruous cacophonies. Only now and then an insistent personal note penetrates the musical chaos.

I remember none of the pictures and only two or three pieces of sculpture exhibited in the Glyptothek. There was Sinding, the brilliant young Norseman, to whom the mystery of beauty is revealed in the naked body. Half Rodinesque, half Greek, he clothes the flesh with new splendor. And there was Limburg's "Violin Player" making rapturous music, heedless of the woman beside him who has swooned with desire. Come to think of it, my memory perhaps betrays me. I may have seen the "Violin Player" only on a picture postal card. But it is very real to me. And I think I have seen it in Denmark.

In the Thorwaldsen Museum the ensculptured thoughts of the artist are harmoniously linked together. I sometimes envy the sculptor because his ideas are so clearly visualized. We who dabble in words are tortured, once in a while, by the unreality of our medium. That, perhaps, is the reason why Arthur Brisbane entertains himself by manufacturing furniture—at a loss. "Chairs," he once said to me in the strange reaction that overtakes the tired brain worker at times, "chairs are real. But words, bah! are nothings!"

The Thorwaldsen Museum is the picture of Thorwaldsen's brain; but of a brain vibrant no more with emotion. Every statue is a living monument to a dead idea. The moment a child is born it is no longer an organic part of the mother. The moment we express an opinion we

lose it. I am as indifferent to my poems, once they have sprung into life, as the cockatoo is to its little ones who have escaped from the egg. This may be a horrible ornithological blunder. I am not up in bird-lore. But I am sure there is some kind of fowl that treats its progeny rather badly. Thorwaldsen would probably feel like walking in a graveyard, had he lived to see the edifice raised in his honor. Every ornament would have marked some dead emotion.

Thorwaldsen's statues and sculptures lack in nothing save strength. To me their charm is conventional. I wonder whether he himself was never bored with his sleepy lions and the meaningless grace of his Cupids? Who knows, perhaps his brain, too, had a chamber of horrors to which he alone held the key. And while his soul was frightened by monstrous visions, his hands craftily fashioned images pleasing and bland.

We who have succumbed to the spell of Rodin are lost forever to the art of the Danish master. We have thrilled with the lyric rapture of the Frenchman's "Kiss," and with bated breath beheld the "Hand of God." Rodin is the incarnation of mental rebellion and Titanic strength. Michael Angelo and Lucifer are his spiritual progenitors. Thorwaldsen's body was the temporal mansion of some smiling Greek with ringlets carefully trimmed, enamored of surface beauties, neither profound nor subtle.

Again disappointed, I wended my way to the house of Professor Brandes.

They had told me strange stories of the Professor in Copenhagen, of his many peculiarities and how conceited he was! They said that his memoirs, upon the writing of which he was now engaged, were chiefly the accounts of dinners tendered to him in his long career, and that he had carefully preserved all the menus.

I shall write freely of Brandes as one writes of the dead. He is already an institution. Here was a thinker and student famed throughout the civilized world, but his immediate neighbors remembered only his foibles! They were proud of him as of the Glyptothek, only a little less. He was a "sight" to be pointed out to strangers. Of the immense mental stature of the man who has left his impress on Europe, they had hardly an inkling. I was also told that Brandes receives a small government pension, reckoned large in those parts, of some few hundred dollars. And how years ago he had deserted Denmark in anger because a professorship he coveted had been withheld from him because of his racial affinity with Moses.

This view apparently is erroneous. "Who," he writes to me, "told you that I could not get in office because I was a Jew? That is ridiculous; the Jews have ten thousand offices in Denmark. I have been these forty years the only Dane who

was a Greek, not a Hebrew. Our nation was befogged by Jewish Christian orthodoxy, and I was compelled to leave the country because I was a freethinker."

My Danish friends assured me that Brandes was a crank, inaccessible to strangers, and asked me whether I had an introduction to him. I explained that I knew two of his intimate friends who would surely have given me introductions, had I known beforehand that I would visit Brandes on my trip abroad.

These things I munched in my mind as I climbed the stairs to the philosopher's simple abode. A copy of *Nineveh* rested securely in a side pocket of my coat. A seductive smile curled my lips.

Without hesitation I pulled the bell.

A maid half opened the door, and upon my question whether the Herr Professor was at home, she mumbled something in Danish which I could not understand, and shut the door in my face.

I waited a little while, and again rang the bell. Again the maid appeared and listened to me with impatience as I informed her in German that I would plant myself in front of the door until she had taken my card to the Herr Professor. She snatched the card from me with an air of disgust, and retreated behind the door. One, two, three, four, five minutes passed, but no response was vouchsafed to my offering.

Then, with grim determination, I rang the bell for the third time. There was a sound of shuffling steps. The door swung open. I caught a vision of a magnificent head, white and immense. Like an irate Jove, George Brandes glowered upon me.

"Good heavens!" he scowled, "what do you want? I am working."

"I want to see you, Herr Professor."

"Everybody wants to see me. I have no time for tourists. I'm not on exhibition. Good-bye!"

Already the vision receded. One moment more, and the door would have closed behind him. I played my trump card.

"Hold!" I cried, with conscious dignity. "I am George Sylvester Viereck."

"Yes?" he replied, with a vacant stare.

I repeated my name with slow emphasis. I was not impatient with the old man. There was no shade of annoyance in my voice. But no gleam of intelligence leaped from the eyes of the sage.

"I told you I was busy," he angrily reiterated. "If I were to see everybody, I should have to abandon my work."

"But I'm not everybody," I answered. "I have come all the way from America to meet you. I can't leave Denmark without talking to you. That would be *Hamlet* with Hamlet left out."

He was moved.

"Come in," he said.

Thus I entered the Holy of Holies.

His studio, like Faust's, was lined with books. There were books everywhere. Nothing else. Books, and the dome of his furrowed head seemed to fill the room.

"I do not come to you without introductions," I said. "I bring you greetings from your old friend," and I mentioned the name of a well-known German writer. "He intended to write me a note for you, but I did not get it in time."

"Too bad," Brandes rejoined, "I've never heard of the man."

Nothing dismayed, I added sweetly: "And, of course, our mutual friend James Huneker has entrusted me with his compliments."

"Don't know him," the Sage of Copenhagen snapped back.

"What!" I exclaimed, "you don't know the greatest American critic, the only man in America who understands you?"

Brandes reflected.

"Of course," he said, "I know his books. He is strangely brilliant for an American."

"He's half Irish, half Hungarian," I interjected.

"But I have never met him in person."

"Well," I said, still undaunted, "I am a considerable personage myself."

He looked at me with amused incredulity.

"I am the author of several books. My poems mark a new epoch in American literature. I have

given a new impulse to the poetry of my age. Besides, for my recreation, I am editing two magazines."

"You're rather precocious," the sage retorted.

Then, as if groping in some far convolution of his cerebrum for a reminiscence half erased from the scroll, he asked me: "Are you related to Louis Viereck, the former Socialist leader?"

"He is my father," I said.

"Strange!" he exclaimed. "Do you know that almost twenty-seven years ago Louis Viereck sought refuge in my house from police persecution?"

"How romantic!" I said, inwardly pleased. "What was the matter?"

"There was a Socialist Congress in Copenhagen. The so-called 'Exception-laws' against the Socialists had just been framed by Bismarck, and secret police spies dogged the steps of every participant in the Congress. Our own police were in league with the Germans, and hardly had your father been seated when a policeman inquired for him. I received him courteously, and explained to him that I had never seen Mr. Viereck."

The ice being thus broken, we launched upon conversation.

"You were not always so inaccessible, then?" I queried. "You live strangely secluded for one so famous."

"Yes," he replied, without vanity, and, let it

be added, without smiling, "I *am* famous. But that is a meaningless phrase in view of the decreasing sale of my books. In some cases the sales have dwindled down to thirty or forty copies."

"Impossible!" I cried, "your publishers must be guilty of—miscalculations."

"No; some have been excellent friends to me; nevertheless, only two copies of the German edition of my *Memoirs* were actually sold. They haven't even issued the second volume. But I do not ask them. I am too proud."

"How could you have made your reputation, if the sales of your books are so circumscribed?"

"I am sure I don't know. Some time ago I was lionized in France. I was dragged from banquet to banquet. Countless tributes were paid to my genius. And yet, I knew that none of the people who said sweet things to me had read my books. Only one of my books had been issued in French at that time.

"But of course some of my books have been more fortunate than others. The complete edition of my Danish writings was subscribed for by no less than six thousand people between 1899 and 1902. That is a great number for a country with a population of only two and one-half million people; and naturally there were many editions of single books previously and afterward.

"Aside from this success, the sales of my Dan-

ish books have, however, averaged only seven hundred copies—and after several successes have brought me little money. My *Lord Beaconsfield* was published by a prominent American house, and no less than one hundred thousand copies were sold, but I never received a cent in royalties. There have been three editions of my complete works in Russian, but I never saw a *kopeka.* All my books have been translated into Polish, but I have never received a *heller.* My *Main Tendencies,* six volumes, published in Germany in nine large editions, did not net me a *pfennig.*"

"But what of the magazines? I have heard it said that they pay you fabulous prices."

A sad smile flickered across the Olympian visage.

"When the twentieth century was about to be ushered in, a prosperous German newspaper wrote to me that they had planned to publish a full page review of the nineteenth century by a poet, a philosopher, and a scholar; and that I was their man because I combined in my person the qualities of the three.

"I don't care to write for newspapers. It detracts from my vitality and distracts me from my real pursuits. But as the chance for such an article occurs only once in an hundred years, and as I didn't expect to live through another century, I agreed to undertake the task for a remuneration of five hundred crowns [one hundred and twenty-

five dollars]. They replied regretting that they had written to me, and that in view of my unreasonable demands they would be compelled to enlist the services of less expensive pens."

"But surely American magazines pay you well?"

"They write to me occasionally for contributions and ask me to name my own price. I don't care to do that sort of thing for less than five hundred crowns. And they invariably pay me less than one-half of the price I demand."

"That is almost incredible."

"I am old. The public is used to me now. They want new people. Younger writers. I do not blame them."

I wonder if Homer or Goethe would have observed with such colossal indifference the rising of new suns on the literary horizon? And if the yellow press would have put them on half pay?

"Why," Brandes continued, and his eyes swept across an immense row of books reaching from one end of the room to the other, "all my books published in the English language earn for me less than fifty dollars per annum."

Fifty dollars! Was such the interest paid by us on the greatest outlay of intellectual capital the world has known since the days of Voltaire!

"But," I questioned, "how about the series of contemporary men of letters published under your

editorship in the United States, in Germany, and in England?"

"I have resigned the editorship. Subsequently, the publisher offered me one hundred marks [twenty-five dollars] for the use of my name.

"And then," Brandes added, pointing contemptuously to a booklet in English, "this is merely one chapter from one of my books. I suspect it is too expensive to reprint them entirely in the English language. I write only in Danish. As a young man, I used to write German and English, but I can't bother to rewrite my books several times. I must devote myself to my studies."

There was something inspiring as well as pathetic in the figure of this world-renowned writer who faithfully works night and day to embody his visions for the hundred-odd people who form his literary constituency. Swinburne said with delightful irony that he wrote for antiquity. Brandes could never have said this. Nature, in his anatomy, omitted the funny-bone. The giants of literature are rarely endowed with a sense of humor.

Brandes is tremendously serious, yet without illusions. "There are only a few immortals," he said. "In all the revolving years the world has produced scarcely twelve; and I shall not be among them. And yet, work alone is the cup that stays and comforts us. In work we dimly apprehend the grim exultation of God when He

moved on the face of the waters, and at His breath, Life *was.*"

"Material values," Brandes exclaimed, "can never compensate us. There are no values but intellectual values. Hegel, the great German philosopher, placed the mind above all things. He synthesized his philosophy in the phrase that a wretched *bon mot* is greater than the sun. As for me, I prefer the sun to a wretched *bon mot.* But surely the mind of a Titan like Goethe outbalances almost a world."

"Do you then believe in the Superman?"

"I never take into my mouth words which others have spit out. I despise such outworn patterns of speech more than I can express. But I believe in the ego. I believe in great men. I believe in great individualities. I don't believe in the rabble."

"But," I said, "is not a great man merely the mouthpiece of the rabble, the conscious exponent of all that labors blindly in the sub-consciousness of his people?"

"On the contrary," he replied, "all great men have been at odds with their age. A great man's life is one continuous battle with mediocrity, which he outshines and which strives to obscure him. When Shakespeare left London, not a single banquet was given in his honor. When he buried himself in Stratford, mediocrity triumphed. But now the laugh is on them. A great man expresses

merely his own individuality, although it has been said of Voltaire that he was not a man but an epoch."

"But do you not believe in some kind of progress? We who stand on the shoulders of Shakespeare should be able to sing more divinely than he."

"There is little progress in the world. Much that we call progress is merely the progressive idiocy of the world. Technical progress and scientific progress have, I admit, wrought more changes in my own lifetime than in all the years that have revolved from the days of Julius Cæsar to my own birth. But in art it is different. There we discover no trace of evolution, but only changing cycles of blossom and decay. We have created nothing greater than the ninth book of the Iliad, or the Sistine paintings of Michael Angelo."

We exchanged courtesies, books. We spoke of many things; of Anatole France, of Maeterlinck, and of Denmark. The rest of the interview is blurred from my memory. But I shall never forget the Jovian head, white and immense, of George Brandes.

There is something wonderful in this man. His readers shrink to a handful from an hundred thousand; he still goes on in the unruffled tenor of his intellectual pathway. A pessimist, he has no hopes nor illusions. There is only the inspiration, perhaps the madness, of work. Like

Socrates, he follows blindly the dictates of his *daimon*.

George Brandes embodies a force that is alien to us. We would reckon a man who gave his heart's blood to an unheeding world little more than a fool. But it is only the fool divinely blind to his own interest who shall save the world. Standing reverently in the studio of Brandes, I realized that literature, like religion, has its ascetics, its saints and its martyrs. George Brandes in his library reminded me of some monk in a lonesome cloister decorating ancient parchments with curious designs for the glory of God. Even thus, patiently through the years, the sage of Copenhagen illumines the Book of Life.

CHAPTER XIII

GAMBRINUS AND BACCHUS

GERMANY, to borrow the phrase of a teetotaler, is the classic land of moderate drinking. Out of Germany came the temperance drink, beer. Bacchus Dionysios has found many singers. Gambrinus is unsung, if not unhonored, of poets. Yet is not the hop as fragrant as the grape? I am convinced that many poets who celebrate the vine have been inspired by beer. But beer doesn't rhyme well. We deem it a word without literary traditions. Still, the history of beer is ancient and honorable, and its literature reaches back to the dusk of the Pagan gods. Julian, the Apostate, was the first contributor to the literature of beer. He wrote a satirical poem against it. He also wrote satirical poems against the Christians. But the pale Galilean has conquered. And, strange as it may seem, beer has been a steady companion of Christian expansion.

The watchword " Bibles and Beer " is applicable in a sense unsuspected by those who reproachfully coined it. When the Roman world power, the bulwark of Paganism, was demolished, the beer of

the Teutons supplanted the Pagan wine. At first the odor of heathen festivals attached to the brew of Gambrinus. But the wary Church adopted it along with the holidays of the heathens, and it was brewed in the monasteries. And in the drinking songs of the Germans, pæans of Christ were substituted for the pæans of Wotan. The Salvation Army and the Protestant churches seem to adhere to the same ecclesiastical policy; they both bawl devotional hymns to the rousing tunes of the convivial songs of the German student.

The good monks of the Middle Ages served Bacchus and Gambrinus with equal zeal. Chronicles tell of a hop garden near the monastery of Freising, in 768. The Swedish bishop and celebrated chronicler, Olaf Magnus, remarked in 1502 that the wine in the South and the beer in the North were steadily improving. The papal legate, Raimundus Lucullus, justified his cognomen by a rapturous tribute to the beer brewed in Hamburg. Martin Luther was a jolly good fellow. It goes without saying that he sanctioned beer.

Of course, the beer we drink to-day is superior to the beer of the ancient Germans. If Julian had drunk Pilsener, his poetic philippic against beer would have remained forever unwritten. He suffered his life long from indigestion. His temper in consequence was splenetic. He lost his empire because his temper ran away with him. Beer would have saved both his empire and his

temper. If Hamlet had been acquainted with Würzburger, pessimism would not have enthralled him. His family skeleton would not have rattled through five weary acts of Shakespeare. We might have had a comedy of *Hamlet.*

Beer is the lubricant in the wheels of history. Its salutary effect on the digestion has been established by the Imperial German Board of Health. And long before the German Empire had been founded, a shrewd New Testament character advised a young Apostle to indulge in mild alcoholic beverages for his weak stomach's sake and his often infirmities. Alcohol exercises a recognized function in the religious ceremonies of all civilized nations. The Mohammedans, who substitute constant sexual stimulation for temporary alcoholic excitement, have lagged behind in the race of the world's evolution. If teetotalism ever vanquishes temperance in the United States, we shall present a spectacle more saddening than Turkey.

I have never been able to understand why so many parsons seem to be anxious to controvert the first miracle of the Lord. If Christ had been a teetotaler, he would not have changed the water into wine even at his mother's request. He would have turned the wine into sarsaparilla. I am not a Christian minister, but I would not dare dilute with ineffectual words the miraculous wine of Cana.

An American teetotaler has recently drawn an

interesting comparison between the American and the continental method of receiving guests. We, he fondly points out, salute our visitors by urging upon them the necessity of lavatory procedures. "Do you want to wash your hands?" the American host solicitously inquires. The continental host, however, welcomes his guest with an honest libation. The point is well taken, and illustrates the superior manners of the civilized European. Why should he insult his guests by impugning their cleanliness? Let me inform the writer, in case he should be again tempted to travel abroad, that the continental host expects his guests to wash their hands before they come to his house. May he profit by this information!

What should we offer a guest but the aromatic blood of the hop, or the sparkling gold of the grape? If we were Oriental despots, we might add to these a beautiful slave girl. The laws of the land and economic considerations unfortunately compel us to dispense with these affecting tokens of appreciation and friendship. Shall they also bar wine? Libations have been poured wherever friends have met since the days of Homer. The wisdom of the East, and the traditions of our Teutonic sires, both emphasize the philosophy of drink. The soul, as Leibnitz has said, is a house without windows. The lock of the door is incrusted with Care. Self-consciousness, with seven iron bands, barricades the entrance. Alcohol is

the magic key that unlocks the door. Comparative strangers are transfigured and gladdened by the magic of friendship when it has spoken its Sesame. Irksome barriers, which normally only years of close communion could have shattered, are obliterated for the time being. The soul, escaping from its cage for a little while, sings and soars like a bird.

People on the continent, especially the Germans, take their drinks with refinement. They drink as they live—æsthetically. We neither live nor drink in beauty. We spend large amounts of money on drinking. But the subtleties of the Bacchic ceremonial escape us. We are novices in the service of the good god Gambrinus. That is the reason why our waiters despise us. You must have noticed the supercilious servility and condescending smile of the French or the German waiter when you give him your order. He looks down upon us as Barbarians.

The German thrives on the light glass of beer or wine with his meals; whiskey he abhors. We are killed off daily and hourly in the dairy restaurants. We shall never have an American art while we subsist largely on icewater. The plutocratic few are well provided in clubs and expensive eating-places. The average American depends for his lunch on the dairy. Saloons are often uncomfortable and obnoxious. What we need is Childs' with the added inspiration of spirits. In

Germany, you find such places everywhere. The most famous chain of restaurants is Aschinger's, a sort of inspired Childs'.

Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, in his brochure entitled *The Gullet of Berlin,* avers that every second house in the German metropolis is a place where alcohol in some form is vended. Yet drunkenness is almost unknown. That is because people refrain, as a rule, from strong liquor. I am not one of those who would bar even liquor. There are times when it is both safe and delightful to take a cordial. But—a cordial isn't a drink. It is a stimulant, and, taken in excess, a poison. Until we can imprint indelibly upon our brains the difference between a drink and a stimulant, let us keep our hands from the whiskey flagon. Who, by the way, is the god of Cognac?

We have the deplorable tendency to vulgarize things. We cheapen literature in magazines. The Sunday Supplement is the degradation of art. We degrade marriage and love in the court-room. And we make drinking abominable through vulgar and injudicious excesses. We are like the early Christians who dethroned the gods of the Pagans and made them monstrous and wicked. Jupiter was anathematized as a devil. Mercury was looked upon as a thief. Phœbus Apollo became an evil sorcerer, Cupid an imp of hell, and the mother of Cupid—

The obscure Venus of the hollow hill,
The thing transformed that was the Cytherean,
With lips that lost their Grecian laugh divine. . . .

But the woe of the ancient gods was not ended. It remained to the New World to contort the loveliness of Bacchus and the benign smile of Gambrinus into the hideous grimace of the Demon Rum.

Germany, as I have said, is the mother of moderation. We can learn from her, but we can learn more from Denmark. The Germans are naturally moderate. The Danes incline to drunkenness. And we, I am afraid, are more like Danes than Germans. There is a certain instability in our national temperament that shall no doubt disappear when the fusion of races has produced the American type.

The Danish brewing industry is of recent growth. In 1840, only one hundred and fourteen persons, all in all, were engaged in the business, including the workmen. In those days Demon Rum held undisputed sway over Denmark. The Danes were drowned in liquor. Their bodies, soaked with rum, withstood the teeth of corruption in the grave. It was dangerous to strike a match in the propinquity of one of Hamlet's compatriots. Perhaps the plight of the Danish people and of their neighbors, the Swedes, has been responsible for the safety match. I am,

however, not prepared to make an affidavit on this.

At any rate, about 1870, the temperance wave struck the little kingdom. The leaders of the movement discerned with rare sagacity that intemperance could be fought only with a light alcoholic beverage. They talked to the brewers, and the brewers talked to each other. After some scratching of heads, they finally produced a light beer pleasant to the taste, containing a small percentage of alcohol. Later on the State took a hand in the matter by levying a heavy tax on all beers containing more than 2 1-4 per cent. of alcohol by weight. Beer with only 2 1-4 per cent. of alcohol was not taxed at all. The consequence was that all breweries opened up plants for the production of temperance beer.

One-half of all the beer produced in Denmark is temperance beer. They speak of this beer as "non-alcoholic." Avowed advocates of temperance relish it. It is kept on tap in every saloon. If you go to Denmark, by all means try "non-alcoholic" Pilsener and "non-alcoholic" Muenchener. The Danish brewer is forbidden by law to brew beer with over six per cent. alcohol. Beer has almost entirely supplanted rum in Denmark. It is beer alone that has saved Denmark and Sweden from toppling to drunkards' graves. If I were a painter, I would depict Temperance with a jug of foaming Pilsener

bearing the legend: "In this sign thou shalt conquer."

Denmark, too, has a few extremists who clamor for the total elimination of alcohol. They have established model saloons, where a drink called "Sinalco," or "Liquorless," is vended. With heroic determination I tasted this sickening concoction. The innkeeper, a retired officer of the army, looked at me half in pity, half in scorn. "Do you drink this horrid stuff?" I queried. "Yes," he replied; "in fact, 'Sinalco' is excellent—with an admixture of whiskey." That, it seems to me, is an amusing illustration of the failure of absolute prohibition.

Recently an "International Association against the Exaggeration of the Opponents of Alcohol" has been founded in Berlin. The reports of the association will be published regularly in a scholarly manner. Their object will be truth, not propaganda. Their experiments will tend to disprove once for all that alcohol is an absolute poison and that moderate indulgence in alcoholic beverages necessarily leads to intemperance. They will settle the question definitely. If the result of their scientific investigations should lead them to contrary, unanticipated conclusions, they will not hesitate to confess defeat. But that exigency cannot arise. It would contradict the experiences of mankind from the pre-Christian era to Christ, from Christ to his Vicars in Rome, and reverse

the verdict of science from Aristotle to Münsterberg.

It was Münsterberg who recently knocked the bottom out of the prohibition argument. He restated for the New World the experience of the Old when he affirmed that the human system absolutely needs a stimulus of some kind. If we abolish alcohol, sexual and other irregularities will take its place. The Anti-Liquor people were foaming at the mouth. Münsterberg's arguments could not be shaken nor his authority questioned.

The professional prohibitionists remind me of the exorcists of olden days. The people came to them to drive out devils. The tribes of magicians and medicine men waxed fat and happy, until humanity discovered that there were no devils at all, and that, at any rate, they could not be driven out. The antagonists of temperance in the prohibition camp have humbugged the American people by their pretense of driving out Old Nick, when lo, Professor Münsterberg lifted the veil from their sham, and we discovered that alcohol was not a devil.

Meanwhile Demon Rum thrived and flourished, until he has come to be really a menace. You can fight wildfire effectually only with fire. You can fight liquor only with beer. But, of course, had the Demon been properly subjugated, the officials of the Anti-Saloon League would have

been out of a job. It's a mighty dangerous thing to oppose an enemy by mercenaries whose existence depends on keeping that enemy alive!

They are very clever, these Anti-Saloon Leaguers. But when they're up against an honest man, they don't understand. They invented a pretty little trap for the Harvard professor. Through three different literary agencies they swamped him with flattering offers from an alleged group of brewers who were very anxious indeed to have him write an article on the advantage of drinking beer—"Money no object." The professor dropped the missives into his waste-paper basket.

Let those who favor total abstinence follow the lead of the new International Association. Let them investigate coolly and calmly. Meanwhile let us profit by the experience of Europe. Triumphantly on an ocean of beer the Ship of Temperance reaches its destined haven.

CHAPTER XIV

WE AND EUROPE

HAVING explained at some length how I regard Europe, let us now discuss how Europe regards us. Permit me to state right here that in using the plural of the first person I am not referring to myself, but to the United States of America.

Europe looks upon us as the woman *entre trente et quarante* looks upon a boy of eighteen. If I were unkind, I might add that she regards us as a woman of moderate means regards the son of a millionaire. Every American is supposed to be first cousin to Crœsus. Selfishness is certainly mixed with Madame Europe's sensuous delight in us. She is quite prepared to borrow money from us. Her fondness for us nevertheless is perfectly genuine. She is partial to striplings,—a sweet little woman, with the delightful perversion of the fascinating age so graphically depicted by Balzac. We stir her sensually, just as the continental man stirs the American woman.

Europe is in love with our primitiveness. Our young Barbarians all at play kindle in her a pas-

sional conflagration. She forgives the uncouthness of our ideas because we are gloriously young. Our awkwardness is to her a symbol of masculine robustness. We exert upon her the fascination of a Caliban. She does not realize as yet that we have lost the virile earthiness of Caliban without having lost our crudity. She accepts our drafts on the future because she never suspects that we may, in the end, default payment.

Of course, at present she does not take us quite seriously. There is nothing that bars a book from success in England as effectually as an American *furore*. I know, for that is what happened to me. Germany reads our books occasionally, but always with a smile of amusement. She reads them half ashamed, as we read "Nick Carter." Still, our vitality impresses the cultured and effete European. He admires at least the strenuosity of two representative and dynamic American types: Roosevelt and Barnum.

We are forgiven much because we are regarded as being still outside the pale of civilization. Europe will not be surprised at anything we may do. "American" and "grotesquely vulgar" are almost synonymous terms. The newspapers especially are responsible for the most absurd misconceptions of the American character.

There was a time when one might have inferred that the inimitable Baron von Munchausen had left innumerable lineal descendants with a genius

for journalism, and that all were in the New World as correspondents for dailies in Berlin. Many of his progeny are still engaged in their successful conspiracy against truth; but, in spite of their efforts, a saner understanding of us has permeated the German cerebrum. For this transformation we are chiefly indebted to that exchange of intellectual commodities christened *Kulturaustausch* by the Germans.

On the wave of this movement a vast number of able observers, men of acumen and insight, have visited the United States and embodied their impressions in divers publications. Some of their books—most of them—are sheer nonsense. In a few, however, the wheat outweighs the chaff.

Ludwig Fulda's American impressions are avowedly personal and sketchy. Nevertheless, he has made some shrewd and felicitous observations. Von Polenz, the late novelist, is responsible for a very readable and altogether remarkable American book.

Professor Hugo Münsterberg has done for Germany what Bryce has done for England. His book on America is an inquiry into the essential and fundamental American idea. It is a large interpretation of our national life. H. G. Wells alone has developed, in his prophetic vision of our future, similarly stupendous horizons. H. G. Wells and the Harvard professor are intellectual kinsmen. Both men have in common the analyt-

ical faculty of the man of science and the quick intuition of poets. (Professor Münsterberg, I may here betray in parenthesis, is the author of a book of strangely chiseled and passionate verse.)

Wells and Münsterberg illumine with ultraviolet rays the obscurest crevices of individual and racial psychology. Wells somewhere says that the figure of Münsterberg stands out in bold relief from his Harvard colleagues by its German characteristics. I think for once Mr. Wells is mistaken. Münsterberg would be equally conspicuous in any company of men, at home or abroad. We look upon him, however, as a fixture in our own intellectual household. His American traits are as pronounced as his German peculiarities. He is a citizen of the world, drawing his strength from many civilizations. We may hope that this type, almost lost in Europe—the poets and scholars of the Renaissance were its only precursors—may rise modernized and transfigured from the crucible of American civilization.

It is the foreigner who is most apt in characterizing the peculiarities of a people. Ludwig Max Goldberger, Privy Councilor to the Kaiser, has clinched in one significant phrase all that the New World stands for in the eyes of the Old. We are the land of "unlimited possibilities." That is what makes us so interesting to Europe. Like our own Rip Van Winkle, we have slumbered

for centuries. In fact, we have hardly rubbed our eyes awake since we drove the Redcoats away. The awakening of America will be more startling than the awakening of China.

As an economist, Goldberger's primary interest has been in industrial problems. His book is a good book, a big book. The man himself is a powerful agent of the culture exchange. It is one of the chief characteristics of being a councilor that the Emperor never requires one's counsel. Goldberger's case is a brilliant exception. Whenever an American topic clouds the horizon of discussion, the government as well as the press turn to him for illumination.

Goldberger is only one of the nuclei in a large circle of eminent men whose sympathies are always enlisted in affairs of mutual benefit to Germany and the United States. There is, above all, von Holleben, the polished and jovial former ambassador. His Excellency, while advanced in years, is a potent factor in German politics. It was von Holleben who first recognized the importance of the university as a *postillon d'amour* between nations. Professors Brandl and Paszkowski, both of the University of Berlin, are ardent supporters of the close intellectual courtship between their country and ours. Both have visited the United States repeatedly. Paszkowski is the director of the Official University Information Bureau, through which he directs and, to a certain

extent, controls the exchange of students. Professor Schiemann, a friend of the Kaiser, and an authority on political subjects, devotes no small part of his attention to us. Two ministers of state, Hentig and Moeller, have also made special investigations of American institutions. The prime mover of the whole American agitation, however, is that Prince of Peace, William II.

It has been an open secret for many years that it is the wish of William's heart to discover America for himself. I know positively that not very long ago every preparation for his departure to the New World had been made with the profound secrecy characteristic of German diplomacy. The German Ambassador in Washington had carefully mapped out plans for the safety of the monarch. The Foreign Office, however, was opposed to the visit and at the last moment prevailed upon the Emperor to abandon his project, for reasons of international etiquette. The inability of the President of the United States to reciprocate the courtesy of an imperial visit, while vested with the sovereignty of his office, thwarted what would have been an historic event of incalculable importance.

I am felicitating myself that my brief sojourn in Berlin has been a factor, however slight, in crystallizing the pro-American sentiment. We are all urged by the deep-rooted instinct, identical perhaps with the will to live, that prompts us to

leave behind us, of the various phases of our existence, traces more permanent than ourselves.

To that instinct are we indebted for art. We owe to it poetry, photography, music and sculpture. The child writing upon the sand, or Michael Angelo-writing in marble; the Alpine climber imprinting his futile initials upon the ironic face of the rock, and Shakespeare embalming his love in a sonnet—all are swayed by the same masterful impulse, to perpetuate the perennially transient. The Church itself rose in response to this impulse in Jesus; He lives in the bread and wine of communion. And is not marriage likewise the issue of the desire to imprison eternally fugitive emotions?

While I have founded neither a household nor a religion, I have at least commemorated my Berlin days in the German-American Evening. This institution—for as such it may now be regarded—leaped Athene-like from my brain when I delivered a lecture before a brilliant bi-lingual assemblage at the Hôtel de Rome, in a banquet hall consecrated by exchange-professorial tradition to things American in the capital of the Kaiser. The lecture, subsequently repeated before the Colonial Society and the sovereign Burgomaster of Hamburg, outlined German influences on American civilization. The invitations bore the names of several ambassadors, ministers of state, privy councilors, and of distinguished professors. I men-

tion these facts because they are significant of the interest entertained among the dominant intellectual minority in ambassadors from the New World, be they diplomats, pedagogues or poets.

The support of this solid faction is more important than the support of the people. By this I do not intimate that the people are unfriendly to us, but we cannot ask untutored brains to grasp the actual import to them of a distant continent teeming with millions of human atoms. The German people at large regard us still through the romantic haze of Cooper's tales. A few of the more advanced eye us through the spectacles of Villiers de l'Isle Adam's fantastical description of Edison, the magician.

We, being less imaginative, are even more unjust to the Germans. Our knowledge of Germany is largely deduced from Viennese comic operas, and the novels of George Barr McCutcheon. We are, however, equally ignorant of our own country. We have not even a clear mental image of Missouri or Texas. We certainly have no definite knowledge of the determining ethnic factors in the sum of our racial characteristics.

We are satisfied that we have received our culture, as well as our language, from the Pilgrim Fathers. We look upon England as our mother, although we are no less closely related to the country of Nietzsche and Frederick the Great. The facts may be gathered from the bulky volumes of

learned professors. Read, for instance, Professor Faust. I refuse to weigh down the good ship of my style with statistics. Statistics are proverbially mendacious. The German influence by far surpasses the German influx.

We are a Germanic, not an Anglo-Saxon people. The Norseman discovered America five hundred years before Columbus. And despite the historical evidence to the contrary, the Dutch still hold New York. Pennsylvania was on the point of making German the official state language. In the year before the Declaration of Independence, a group of Germans in Philadelphia issued a similar proclamation defying the King. German money fed the flame of the Revolution when it was almost exhausted. Frederick the Great was the first European monarch who officially recognized American independence. The Kaiser in courting America merely continues the policy of his ancestor. The Emancipation of the Slaves and the Fifteenth Amendment, I regret to say, must also, at least in part, be credited to the Germans.

The Germans are the salt of the earth, the chosen people of the New Order. The Frenchman, Gobineau, and the Englishman, Professor Chamberlain of the University of Vienna, have startled the world by rewriting history authentically from the point of view of the Aryan. The most radical of their disciples claim the universe for the Germans. Even Jesus, we are told, be-

longed to a tribe suffused with Aryan-Germanic blood. I am not prepared to maintain that the Crucified was a German, but I am convinced that Pilate, his judge, was, as the Pan-Germans claim, Germanic by blood. This theory bears the earmark of psychological truth. I can touch it and feel it. I dearly love to think that the Roman Governor may have been one of my forbears. He evidently was one of the forbears of Kant. "What is truth?"—the eternal query ringing down the ages could have sprung only from the lips and the brooding brain of a Teuton.

Greece, in the days of its bloom, continues the Pan-German argument, was a nation purely Germanic. (I am reminded here again of the purely Germanic features of Plato.) When the German blood ebbed away, corruption and corrosion poisoned the Athenian body politic. These hypotheses are plausible if fantastic, although I suspect that their authors have stretched their point until it resembles a man, naturally short in stature, who has rested a night under the roof of Procrustes.

We need not draw upon mythology, however, to convince ourselves that English is merely a corrupted Low German dialect. (Remember, dear reader, that I have always insisted upon the æsthetic qualities of corruption.) Our education, our art, and our science are ineradicably German. Our soil itself welcomes the German. The Englishman is, after all, only a German with a Norman

veneer. In America the veneer drops off. By brain-fiber and by blood we are more German than English. These reflections are not mine, I am sorry to say, but emanate from an Anglo-American, Professor John W. Burgess, that excellent friend of the Kaiser. Professor Marion D. Learned, of the University of Pennsylvania, speaks of himself as a "Yankee-German"; and the distinguished Goethe student, Professor Calvin Thomas of Columbia, refers to himself as a "German-American by elective affinity."

Of course, I have used the word "German" in the broader sense of Germanic. My readers, like those of Plato, must accustom themselves to subtle discriminations. The Germans, as distinguished from their Anglo-Saxon cousins, have a vital function in the making of our nation. They furnish an antidote to the venom of Puritanism. I myself have always supplied that antidote liberally.

The victory of the liberal Teutonic spirit is clearly and perfectly foreshadowed in the two foremost Americans politically, Roosevelt and Taft. Theodore, with all his faults, is not, thank Heaven, a Puritan. W. H. Taft, whom I have always loved for the Shakespearean flavor of his initials, is a powerful champion of broad tolerance.

But I have been drifting upon the perilous seas of ethnological speculation. Let us rub the magic ring, and presto, we are back once more where

we started, in the brilliantly lighted hall of the Hôtel de Rome. *Tout Berlin* is present and apparently interested, and the motion is made and carried to perpetuate the German-American Evening.

The principal speaker of the second German-American Evening, six months later, was the author of my being. Let me state that I am not alluding to my father in Heaven, but to my father on earth. The third German-American Evening was an elaborate occasion. Grand Admiral von Köster, newly returned from the Hudson-Fulton celebration, October, 1909 (I mention the date for the benefit of posterity), rendered his homage to the American people. Dr. Wheeler of the University of California, and Professor Moore of Harvard, addressed the assemblage in English.

I hope that the German-American Evening will constitute a permanent forum for the discussion of things German-American in Berlin. But I shall make no such prediction, lest three hundred years from this writing some spectacled, post-graduate student, having lampooned Shakespeare's geography, impeach my historical prophecy in an elaborate dissertation.

I wonder what would have happened if a certain Distinguished Personage had scaled the platform on one of the German-American Evenings, and revealed to a listening world what privately he has confided to me.

Let me say right here that it will be quite impossible to fathom his identity. The things he said to me were so startling that, had they been said by a man of lesser caliber, I should not here set them down. The interview took place at his dwelling. I shall not describe the dwelling. I shall not describe even the room. I don't know that I could describe it. The moment he entered I saw only his eyes. Strange eyes they were, piercing, like those of a visionary. He gazed at me in a way that almost gave me the creeps. His eyes seemed to look straight through me. I don't like people to see through me. That is the reason I shall never marry a clever woman. Of course, I won't be able to help it, if she insists on marrying me.

He looked at me for five minutes. Then he spoke. There were no commonplaces in what he said, no conversational mortar to fill the cracks of silence. Gradually I regained my self-possession. We came to talk of America. I painted in glowing colors the invincibility of the young republic. I always talk well of my country behind her back.

"Yes," he said, slowly, deliberately. "Your resources are boundless, and yet—there are dangers."

"What are these dangers?"

"Grave and terrible perils that will force you to lean upon the staff of the Old World.

"There is, in the first place, the Social Danger. Some of you have realized that. The forces of

Anarchy and Capitalism are close to a clash. You may smile, but I say to you that a revolution is imminent. You have eyes that see not, and your ears are deaf. Perhaps Taft will lead you Moses-like out of the wilderness. But you do not realize that you have lost your way. Reports of violence, conflict and lawlessness, accumulate day by day. We over here take note of them; you do not.

"You are so big that you lose sight of the whole. You know nothing of the country at large. Your newspapers are provincial. Your interests are local. The American press fails in its duty to you. Unpleasant facts are kept out of print. Everything relating to social conflicts is prettily dressed up before it is meted out to you. Your papers print every word of some sensational trial, but I look in vain for reports of the doings of Congress. The speeches of your representatives are buried in the *Congressional Record*. The opinions of amiable criminals and strumpets are commented upon in press-room and pulpit. You are chattering monkeys, brainlessly absorbed in the present, unheedful of the imminent earthquake. We hear its grumblings across the sea. Like the nobles of the court of Louis XVI, you dance in the shadow of the guillotine."

I looked at him questioningly. He was not jesting. Slowly, deliberate, he continued:

"There is a danger even greater than a revolu-

tion, and one from which there is no escape. I think that you as a people do not realize the immensity of your negro problem. There is no way to prevent the slow amalgamation of races. The inferior race will drag you down. History and science indorse my view. There is no possibility of eliminating that black tumor from your national system. By the laws of racial osmosis, you cannot prevent it from staining the skins and the brain-cells of your descendants. In perhaps two or three hundred years you will be a nation of octoroons. I can see the specter of a half-breed despot, the first American emperor. In your folly you have demolished the bars between citizenship and the negro. You have shattered the stronghold of racial prejudice.

"In Germany, the Colonial Society has petitioned the government to exclude from citizenship the children of mixed marriages in the colonies. There is tragedy in such severity. The Booker T. Washingtons may have to suffer. Better for them had they never been born. An intelligent negro, like the child prodigy, is a monster. The negro, like woman, is incapable of self-government. He is inferior even to woman.

"We Aryans are the appointed masters of the world. God has made the white race the guardian of His holy fire. We must cast out the half-breed from the sanctuary. There is only one salvation for you. And even that cannot altogether

save you from deterioration. Call upon Europe for aid. Throw open your gates to all the peoples of the earth who are your kindred. Widen the gulf between black and white. Even encourage dissipation among the negroes. The end justifies the means.

"Keep out the Mongol lest he conspire with the African. Asia is your enemy. Her unctuous grin conceals the fury of her hate. She is most your enemy when most she loves you. Let her not drag down your sons and daughters into the slime of her ancient corruption. Let her meet you in deadly combat rather than in deadlier embrace. Let her sons fight your sons, not furnish your daughters with husbands.

"We Germans want to keep our people where they are. We know that blood and muscle are precious. We actually do import German peasants from Russia. We do not want them to go to you. But for your own sake, I tell you not to restrict immigration. The restriction of immigration is national suicide."

There was something strangely prophetic in this man. For the moment I was under the spell of his extraordinary prediction. But when I set foot again in America I was infected anew with the indomitable optimism that has been our salvation in the past and may be our doom in the future.

Again he spoke, and again I was inclined to dispute his views.

"There is still another danger—the greatest."

"The trusts?"

"Yes, the greatest of all trusts—the most ancient monopoly. Are you freedom-loving Americans purblind? Don't you notice the web of the spider? Don't you see him circling about you? Have you no intimation of the peril that will be the end of your liberty, and hamper your feet in the onward march of the nations?"

"What can that be?'

His eyes gleamed more strangely than ever. He tossed back his hair and I saw the forehead furrowed with thought and care.

"I mean the Roman Catholic Church. The prelates at Rome openly proclaim among themselves that the Church must regain in the New World what she has lost in the Old. Don't you feel the tentacles tightening? Don't you notice the growth of the Catholic sentiment? Before long Roman Catholics will be elected to high offices. Finally, the presidency itself will be in the grasp of the Church."

"I do not share your antipathy to the Church," I interrupted. "Catholics are good citizens. I believe in tolerance for all. I do not believe that the Church will ever exercise great political influence in America. The arm of the Pope is long, but it cannot effectually reach across the sea."

"Perhaps. But the Pope himself may cross

the sea. The Papacy in Italy is doomed. Fugitive popes in the past have fled to France. Whither should the Holy Father flee to-day? I have positive knowledge that the Inner Circle of the government of the Church have outlined a campaign that will enable the Pope, if occasion arises, to establish his power and rear the throne of St. Peter on American soil. In the shadow of that throne your freedom will perish."

I was stunned for the moment. If any man but this man had spoken, I would have laughed in his face. Was he a maniac? Was he a prophet? Or both? I can only repeat what he said, as I reiterated it to myself later when, bewildered but still impressed by his curious and insistent mentality, I strode through the streets of Berlin.

We expect life to run perpetually unruffled. We are inclined to regard as deranged those whose vision is clearer than ours. The world has always crucified its saviors and prophets. The cataclysms of history seem logical and inevitable to impartial posterity. They are utterly surprising to those whom the clash destroys. The unknown force that makes playthings of nations and gods, mercifully strikes us with blindness.

A dozen anxious questions rushed to the tip of my tongue, but before I had time to marshal my thoughts, a uniformed attendant interrupted us a second time.

"His Royal Highness," I heard him whisper, "has been waiting for several minutes."

Half skeptically, half perplexed, I kowtowed, and left the field to the Royal Highness.

CHAPTER XV

I AND AMERICA

My German friends tell me I am extremely American. They mean to imply that I am not an idealist. I admit that I have a bank account, and that, in many ways, I am a Barbarian. Like most celebrated Americans, I am really a self-made man. Let me here throw light on the obscurest chapter of my autobiography.

Soon after we had arrived in this country, my father, having seen the bankruptcy of the intellect abroad, determined that I was to be a son of the soil. I was given into the care of a Baltimore florist, and earned at least my "keep" at the age of twelve. In the morning I went to town with chrysanthemums, roses and smilax; and there was an old lady who bought my flowers from me and always gave me a tip. I was very thankful for that tip. I recently found a letter of mine written to my father, in those Baltimore days, in which I informed him that twenty-five cents a week pocket-money would place me on a sound financial basis.

When the day's toil was done, I devoted my

leisure hours to a libretto entitled *A Rustic Don Juan,* and to a novel, *Eleanore, the Autobigraphy of a Degenerate Woman.* My boss, fortunately or unfortunately, was also a poet. For a brief space we lived in Arcadia. But when, instead of nursing the flowers, we nursed our admiration for each other, business began to languish, and a frantic appeal from the florist's wife compelled my father to take me back.

I was now apprenticed to a florist in New York City at five or six dollars a week. I ran errands, and wrote a poem to the proprietor's wife. I am afraid I was somewhat of a nuisance. I didn't know the difference between East and West. I took bouquets to impossible places. I was inordinately proud of some verses of mine that had managed to creep into print. I had been engaged at Christmas. After the holidays I was discharged. I think they still owe me three dollars —half a week's wages. Some day I shall try to collect them.

My father at last relaxed in his grim determination, and I was once more a schoolboy. When, two years later, I graduated from a Public School, I was the valedictorian. And ever after, like all other valedictorians, I have been perfectly useless. My ignorance is as many-sided as it is profound. Owing to our many changes of residence, my schooling has been frequently interrupted. There are curious gaps in my education. I can't punc-

tuate, spell, sing, or draw. I am blissfully ignorant of grammar, geography and arithmetic. I was absent from school the day we had the multiplication table. God alone knows how I drifted through college.

In Europe I would have been regarded as a youthful prodigy. That might have made me conceited. In America, we expect youth to take upon its shoulders the work of the world. Europe heeds the voice of graybeards. She is also fascinated by bluebeards. But a beard, it seems, is absolutely essential. If I lived abroad, I would still be dependent upon my father. Thus, a lawyer I met in Berlin referred to himself as a "young man of forty," and still counted every week upon the paternal allowance. But he possessed *savoir faire*. He was a matchless dancer and a witty table companion. Socially, no doubt, the Europeans are our superiors.

I did not meet many Americans abroad. I let the American Colony severely alone. There are eighty million Americans in the New World. There will be more presently. I did not go abroad to add new exemplars to my collection. Of course, I never called on my fellow-passengers. I met three of them—the two little girls with their mother, the Hen—on the street. I understand they are doing exceedingly well. But the girl with the pathetic eyes has fulfilled my prediction. She was the only American victim of a railroad acci-

dent on the *Möckernbrücke* in Berlin. Her bright small voice is hushed forever. The alien mould has encompassed her little limbs.

Still, good people, dry your tears. Like Lion, in a *Midsummer Night's Dream,* I am, in reality, a "gentle beast of good conscience." As far as I know, the lady is still alive. But for the purpose of this book it was essential to kill her. I had prophesied evil things for her, and it would have been crudely inartistic to let the loose strands of my story dangle irritatingly before the eyes of the reader. Nero set a city on fire for the sake of a beautiful phrase. Why should not I, to soothe my artistic conscience, dispatch one hapless girl?

The distance between America and Europe, I believe, is three thousand miles. But the distance between Europe and America is three thousand years. News from home seems to travel with the exasperating slowness of an invalid centipede. The cable merely whets the appetite without appeasing the hunger. The Paris edition of the New York *Herald* is principally devoted to local gossip. There are two or three publications in English. I grasped at them as a drowning man at a straw. But it happened to be the straw that broke the camel's back. The camel of my patience rose on its hind legs.

It was in the whirl of the Presidential campaign. But when I tearfully asked for the bread of information, Europe presented me with a stone.

A vague feeling of dissatisfaction, like malaria, invaded my blood. The nudities of Olga Desmond were powerless to charm me. The glittering uniforms of the soldiers had lost their glamor for me. I became increasingly conscious of the distance that divided me from the Western world. Like a secret mouse, patriotism, nimble-toothed, nibbled away at my heart.

Then came election night, with its delirious and delightful uncertainties. The earlier part of the evening I spent at the house of Ludwig Max Goldberger. The Consul-General and his charming wife were among the guests. The atmosphere was surcharged with passionate interest in things American. But the city without was lulled in slumber. Never the sound of a rattle, nor the cadenced "Extry!" of the newsboys! I pictured to myself the crowds surging in waves before those bulletin boards in my far-away Nineveh. I was one with them. I was carried away by their emotional frenzy. And my excitement affected the others. Telepathically the emotion of those millions vibrated through our brains. We yelled with them, not indeed with our throats, but with our immortal souls.

Our gathering broke up comparatively early. Special cable reports of the election—think of it, enviable American in Akron, O.!—special cable reports would be read at the Adlon. So ran the announcement that lifted us heavenward as Jupiter

transported Europa upon his horns. A throng of Americans had assembled in the palatial vestibule of the German Waldorf-Astoria. How I loved to listen to their speculations! How sweet the resiliency of those nasal twangs. They were my own people! This, for one night, was *home!*

It was about twelve o'clock at night, five hours later than in New York. The polls had hardly been closed for two hours. With exasperating slowness the news trickled through the bed of the ocean. But, of course, the returns were very meager for several hours. Newspaper opinion had been so effectively manipulated in the preceding months, that we in Europe were blindly fumbling and grumbling for facts in the general confusion.

Quietly amidst the excited throng the Ambassador of the United States sat back in his chair, chatting. David Jayne Hill is the most popular ambassador in the capital of the Kaiser. From the first, Berlin has treated Hill with the consideration that one bestows on a guest who has been inadvertently wounded. What in the beginning was courtesy has crystallized into habit. Hill's personal fascination has captivated the Germans. The Americans likewise adore him. His simplicity is in itself distinction. Instead of assuming a comic opera uniform that provokes the ridicule of the *cognoscenti,* he appears even at

functions of state in the unostentatious apparel of any other American gentleman.

There was a time when ambassadors were but the mouthpieces of the sovereigns who made them. To-day the ambassador is the spokesman of the people he serves. The ambassador of to-morrow will be the poet bearing forward the torch of his people's genius. Even to-day the most important embassies are placed in the hands of men of literary attainment. James Bryce and M. Jusserand are distinguished men of letters. Count Bernstorff, the German Ambassador in Washington, is a brilliant speaker. When I first met Dr. Hill, I knew him to be the author of several philosophical works, but I did not know that I was partially indebted to him for whatever graces of style I may possess. I had no idea that the man clothed with the sovereignty of the United States was the author of my old college text-book—Hill's *Rhetoric.*

Between three and four o'clock in the morning we knew that Bryan had been overwhelmed by the usual landslide. There was general rejoicing. The proprietor of the Adlon spoke a word of command, and champagne rained like manna. An unseen band began to play "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," and the rhythm of the music blended with the beat of my heart. It is quite probable that there was no band. My recollections of the rest of the evening are obscured by a roseate haze.

That night I was unfaithful to Europe. My heart longed for America fiercely, as the cannibal yearns for his peculiar diet. Madame Europe, you are very wonderful, though in your youth you were a goose and fell in love with a bull. Columbia is very naïve, I admit, but there is a certain charm in her inexperience. I admire your knowledge, Madame. There is fascination in your lips, painted, and salt with sophistication. But sometimes I am chilled by the feeling that perhaps you are merely an old coquette. I wonder whether your ideals, too, are not powder and paint. There is a cynical twist in your smile that exasperates me beyond endurance.

We, I think, are more genuine, after all. We imagine we are sophisticated, but that is a fond delusion. Columbia is like a squaw who insists on wearing beauty plasters all over her face. Such artificialities, Madame Europe, are becoming to you. They enhance the fascination of a rococo lady. They are ludicrous on the face of the squaw. But we shall get over those things. We shall be frankly Barbarian. The Middle Ages have not bequeathed their wisdom to us; neither have they left us their folly.

Our common sense is refreshing. There is the Father of our Country. I have made fun of him once in a while. Yet I admire George Washington. I take off my hat to him. Everybody can die for his country. It takes a higher courage to

run away for it. George Washington ran away for eight years. Think of the superb legs of George running through the swamps of New Jersey! If Washington had been a European he would not have run away. He would have died for his country—and we might still be an English province.

Yes, Madame, I repeat, you are very wonderful; and you eat truffles for breakfast. But one tires of truffles. Oatmeal is more conducive to health. And not every one who delights in truffles is a *gourmet*. It is a taste that the gourmet and the hog have in common. And, Madame, I beg your pardon,—not all your lovers are *gourmets*. But they are all weary with world-wisdom. They suffer from mental indigestion. Our indigestion is due to mince pie. Your stomach balks at Nietzsche and Stirner. Besides, you are very ungrateful. Vainly your Hauptmanns and Sudermanns perform intellectual acrobatics. Hardly a smile responds from lips eternally bored. You are a child of the spouse of Marcus Aurelius:

If one should love you with real love,
Such things have been— . . .

* * * * *

You'd give him, poison, shall we say?
Or what, Faustine?

You are fascinating, but be wise. Madame, I counsel you: put not your faith in striplings. The white magic of virginity defeats the black magic of Circe. Thinking it over, I shall not keep house with you, Madame. Somehow, after all, my heart goes out to Columbia. The cynical smile around your cruel mouth deepens. I know what it insinuates. The *roué,* you say, delights in the seduction of innocence. But I am not a *roué.* Not mine the loathsome emotion of Verlaine in that most morbid sonnet ever penned by the hand of man.

I shall not corrupt America. I am myself uncorrupted at heart. I have passed through fires of sin, but they have not singed a hair of my head. Mine shall be the nobler pleasure of imparting knowledge. And I shall teach Columbia what you have taught me. I shall not teach her all. Of course, people who marry to uplift their wives invariably get the worst of it. It is quite possible that America will vulgarize me. But at least my gifts, whatever they may be, shall be thrown into the crucible of the future. Perhaps they are needed in the miraculous transformation.

There was a time when I wavered between two literatures. I consulted with friends on both sides of the ocean, and it was finally agreed upon that America, being poorer than Europe, needed me more. I decided to become an American classic.

I voluntarily deserted the company of Baudelaire and of Heine, for that of Longfellow and Whittier.

I will not pose as a martyr. It really wasn't a matter of choice with me. I can't help being an American. I am a son of this soil. Whatever I am, America has made me. My feelings for her are deeper than gratitude. Like all deep things, like love and faith, they are instinctive. But I am not sentimental. I am like the lover who is not blind to the faults of his mistress. I hate and I love her.

I was never comfortable abroad. I sometimes seem to myself a chameleon—an inverted one. I always assume a color at variance with my environment. There was an ever tangible barrier between Europe and me. The memory of *home* severed us like a sword. I never knew how dearly I loved the New World until late one night, when the steamer glided into port. New York beckoned to me, glorious and golden in barbaric splendor. Like a city wrought in fire she arose! Like a Titan woman of Baudelaire she drew me upon her bosom.

And I, remembering my entry into Berlin, now seemed to myself like a young Barbarian who, having escaped unscathed from the Siren City, has returned to his pristine love. Marvelous tales he tells her, and circles her breasts with strange jewels. And only sometimes in the night when,

listless and uncomprehending, she slumbers beside him, his thoughts wander back to perfumed women with painted lips and wise, far away beyond the watery hills.

THE END